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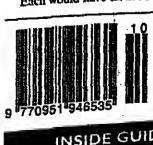
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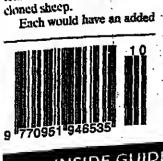
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thy male attitudes CITY+ WITH PAGES OF JOBS **NEW LABOUR ...** BUT IT'S OLD AT HEART says Red or Dead's Wayne Hemingway COMMENT, PAGE 19



WHAT TO WEAR THIS SPRING The new looks from McQueen, Berardi and Webber

FASHION, PAGE 15

Newspaper of the Year for photographs



4 March 1998

Allies blamed for Iraq cancer torment

SEVEN YEARS after the end of the Gulf war, a nightmare "epidemic" of leukemia and stomach cancer is claiming the lives of thousands of Iraqi civilians who live near the former have used some form of war zone, including children so chemicals in their attacks. young that they were not even born when hostilities ended. Iraci doctors in the southern city of Basra have recorded a fourfold increase in cancer - espe-

cially among young children since 1991. Doctors fear that farms ala in 1991, she smelt "a burnwhich produce most of the city's ing, choking smell, something food have been contaminated by like insecticide". Two doctors indepleted uranium shells used by the Allies during the last tank believe that the famics from battles of the war. But some burning oil refineries may have Iragis suspect that American contained carcinogeas; anothand British bombing of Saddam er spoke of "radiation" from Hussein's chemical warfare factories may be to blame - or that

says baa, and

By Charles Arthur

UNLESS you are seriously rich,

the following may be a crushing

blow: Dolly the sheep's succes-

sors could have a significantly

higher annual income than you

This fact emerged yesterday as PPL Therapeuties, the Ed-inburgh company licensed to produce cloned farm animals,

announced that it could fulfil

the £100m annual world de-

mand for the blood dotting pro-

tein Factor IX using only 50

_f2m each, to be exact.

Science Editor

What's white, woolly,

earns £2m a year?

Even child cancer patients

human gene so that it generated

the clotting protein in its milk.

That could then be extracted

and sold on the world market.

- a protein essential for caus-

rived from human plasma.

very excited by this very high-

in human blood are very low.-

so the sheep have made 60 times

the naturally circulating amount

In the UK alone, Factor IX

Exclusive

By Robert Fisk in Bashdad

The mother of Ali Hillal, an eight-year-old child, who lay dying in the al-Mansur bospital in dreds of children in the past member of the Royal College of - the Muslim sect which re- showing me his maps, we removed my right breast. Then not to cover China in a serious Baghdad last week, told me that three years - Dr Yasser Raouf, Physicians who is a cancer spe-belled against Saddam Hus- walked into the hallway outside I had a re-occurrence on my

after Allied aircraft had bombed a broadcasting station near their family home in Diterviewed by The Independent bombs during the war.

US aircraft may themselves who might survive, however,

Latif Abdul Satar, five, in the Saddam Husseln City Hospital, Baghdad. He has leukaemia and is not expected to survive their lives. At the al-Maosor hos- substitute for Vincristine. pital - which has treated hon-

of the desperate need for Vincristing and Methortresate for eukenna patients. Some children are receiving the left-over medicines of infants who have already died. Five year-old Latif Abdul

Sattar, from Babylon, also bald from chemothecapy - he looks like a Chemobyl victim - was diagnosed with non-Hodgkin's lymphoma three months ago but has been given only a 60 per

are in some cases dying for lack cent chance of survival because factories, the Iraqi health min- al-Ali said. "There are rivers dealy pulled up her blouse to reof vital medicines that could save he is being treated with a istry has made no effort to there. And always the wind

tal says that in 1997 he treated 380 cancer patients in his own clinic - compared to scarcely \$0 per year before 1991. In a country which is disin-

tegrating under the effect of sanctions, there are no official government statistics on the startling increase in cancer reported by doctors. Perhaps fearing that cities may have been polluted by bio-chemical warfare products from bombed

In his house denieology department, Dr al-Ali has pinned to the wall a set of maps of Basra governorate and Nasiriyah city, showing that most new cancer cases come from areas immediately to the east of the tank battles between US and Iraqi forces in February of 1991.

farms throughout this area," Dr mother of five children, sud-

publicise the tragedy. And since comes from the west, towards Dr Jawad Khadim al-Ali, a most of the victims are Shittes Basra." When Dr al-Ali finished sobbed. "Four years ago, they because of Murdoch's interests, the chief resident doctor, told me cialist at Basra's largest hospi- sein's rule in the aftermath of to find a mass of young women neck. Now I have pain in my left the war - there is little incen- and several old men waiting to tive for the Iraqi regime to care. see him, all of whom had de-

> veloped cancer in the past five years. A woman with a crutch had a bone tumour in her thigh. A young woman in a black chador - a non-smoker with no history of cancer in her family - was suffering from lung cancer, a woman of 51 wearing an Islamic "There are canals as well as scarf, a schoolteacher and

have breast cancer," she breast. Please help us. We are human beings like you." Like most cancer patients in Iraq, she is likely to die. "Cancer isn't contagious," Dr Raouf says. "But it's moving from south to the north of the country as if it was

au infectious disease." ■ This was n joint investigation with Channel 4, whose report on Iraq's cancer 'epidemic" will be screened at 7pm tonight.

The war children, page 13

Mr Blair is evidently deeply

'Times' accused of bowing to China

By Rob Brown Media Editor

NOW IT isn't only Rupert Murdoch's publishing house HarperCollins which is facing accusations of kow-towing to the Communist regime in Peking. The Times newspaper -owned by the Australian mogul since 1981 - has also drastically scaled back its critical coverage of China as its rapacious proprietor pursues his commercial interests there.

The claims come from leading China-watcher Jonathan Mirsky, who was East Asia Editor of The Times until two months ago and has remained on a freelance basis since he retired in December.

Mr Mirsky, who won an international award for his coverage of the Tiananmen Square veal a missing right breast. "I massacre, claims that "The Times has simply decided,

> par hosted by the Freedom Forum, an international media foundation, and posted on that organisation's Internet website - are bound to inflame the controversy surrounding the decision by HarperCollins to dump a forthcoming book by the former governor of Hong Kong, Chris Patten, entitled East and West.

Mr Mirsky told The Independent yesterday that he regarded this decision as "shameful".

Commenting on The Times' general suppression of anything which might rile the Chinese authorities, at the Freedom Forum he said: "I don't know of any major paper in Hong Kong which has taken this kind of decision on its China coverage. And if it had, I am sure we would all say it is a scandal.

"We have here what is arguably the traditionally most famous newspaper in the world. and it has just decided - it has not taken an executive decision, but an owner's position - to leave China and Hong Kong

alone." Mr Mirsky alleges that senior News International executives flew to Peking in a vain bid to secure an exclusive interview with China's leader Jiang Zemin on the eve of the handover of Hong Kong. They were so eager for this scoop that they agreed to withdraw any embarrassing questions about the treatment of China's dissidents.

Mr Mirsky pointed out that The Times was the only Londonbased broadsheet not to cover the recent arrival in London of China's most famous dissident, Wei Jingsheng.

Leading article, page 18 Murdoch's empire, page 19

Blair ready to ditch elected councils

ing clotting - is prescribed for Dolly: a £100m industry

approximately 400 people who have the "B" form of The protein would be pure. so it should be disease-free. By haemophilia, the rarer form of contrast, the Government said the disease in which the blood last week that all British-derived will not clot. The UK market for blood plasma (from which Pac-Factor IX is about £4m annually, and the world market is 25 tor IX is made) would be destroyed, because of fears that it times that. Most is presently decould be contaminated by "new variant" Creutzfeldt-Jakob Dis-PPL says that its transgenic ease, caused by eating BSE-insheep produce 300mg per litre of Factor IX in their milk. Alan

fected food-PPL has licensed the tech-Colman, the company's renique that produced Dolly-taksearch director, said: "I am ing the DNA from an adult and putting it into an egg cell whose level result. Levels of Factor IX nucleus has been removed. The company could quickly proapproximately 5mg per litre duce a flock able to out-produce every tival, feeding it on nothing more complex than grass.

TONY BLAIR will today tell He also offers councillors a cluding schools, is at present too Labour councillors that unless carrot. If they cooperate, he variable, Mr Blair writes. He worried by the size of turnouts they cooperate with Whitehall promises to legislate to give compares the unevenness of at local government elections in carrying forward his plans for local services, they will be replaced, probably by non-elected and possibly a cut of the busiquangos, writes David Walker. "If you are unwilling to work, government removed from

to the modern agenda then the Government will have to look to other partners to take on your role," he says in a pamphlet for. the Institute of Public Policy Research, the Labour-inclined

them new responsibilities in health and crime prevention ness rates which the Thatcher local control. In unvaroished language - for a Prime Minister - he says that

the choice confronting the town and county halls is now clear: they are either for him or against him. The quality of services, in-

councils with the situation in Victorian times when "a patchwork quilt of boroughs, boards and committees" overlapped and competed with each other. The way forward is not some

rationalisation of powers in councils' favour. Instead future councils must act as impresarios in their areas, guaranteeing quality services but not themselves being service providers.

and calls for bright ideas about increasing participation. "Councils need to avoid getting trapped in the secret world of the caucus," he says. He advocates citizen's juries, more polling, fewer com-

mittee meetings, more young councillors, elected mayors - in short, a revolution in the way councils now operate. Corruption revealed, page 4

sources director at City Centre

Restaurants, Britain's largest

Diners will pay for the minimum wage

TIPPING could become a thing such as TGI Friday's, Café plans being considered by the pay for restaurant workers. Low Pay Commission, writes

Andrew Yates. It is working on how to im-

of the past, with an automatic Rouge and Bella Pasta, fears the service charge added to all commission plans to exclude restaurant bills, in response to tips in calculating minimum

Many workers rely on tips to top up their salary. Average pay in the sector is well below plement the national minimum the minimum likely to be inwage, and last night restaura- troduced by the Government If teins predicted the proposals restaurateurs have to raise would increase the cost of eat- wages it will cost the industry ing out. Whitbread, with chains millions of pounds. They are

planning to claw the money back by levying an automatic service charge which wili go to them rather than employees, or raising the price of meals. Simon Ward, government

affairs director at Whitbread, said: "We are considering introducing a standard service charge but that would have the effect of reducing incentives for staff to provide good service." David Potts, human-re-

quoted independent restaurant group, which runs Deep Pan Pizza, Garfunkels and Café Uno. said: "We don't levy a service charge at the moment ... but we would have to give it serious consideration if this policy is adopted. Companies must do something to maintain their

Tips of the trade, page 4

of this high-value protein." INSIDE GUIDE: WEATHER, P2 ◆ CROSSWORDS, P28 AND EYE P10 ◆ TODAY'S TELEVISION, EYE P12 ◆ SPORT, P25-P28 ◆ FULL CONTENTS, P2

Before you let a company connect Cisco Retweet your business to the Internet, 25k yourself "Who connects them to the Internet?"

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No regrets and no apologies from Irvine

Chief Political Correspondent

DIY STORES have joined the lengthening list of the people the Lord Chancellor has upset. after Lord Irvine rubbished their wallpaper and said be had no regrets about choosing hand-printed Pugin for the £650,000 refurhishment of his state apartments in the House of Lords.

Declaring that he had no reason to apologise for the cost of the lavish restorations. the Lord Chancellor said future generations would be "grateful" for the quality of the work done on his grace-and-favour accommodation in the Palace of Westminster.

The Lord Chancellor could not go down to B&Q or Homebase for his wallpaper, he made clear to MPs on the cross-party committee on public ad-

"We are talking about quality materials which are capable of lasting for 60 or 70 years. We are not talking about something down in a DIY store which may collapse after a year or two;" he said. "While I understand that £650,000 appears to be a large sum of money I believe it is a noble cause and future generations will be grateful,"

MPs were startled at the boldness of a man who, in a few ponderous legal sentences, had transformed himself from a national hate-figure, plundering the public art galleries for his walls, into a self-declared defender of the national

There was a point during his evidence when the Lord Chancellor appeared to be so impressed by his own replies, that he paused as if expecting applause from the MPs.

Instead, he was relentlessly of Tory MPs. He dismissed the

a "remarkable storm in a teacup although I entirely accept that £650,000 is a substantial sum of money".

Challenged by Tory MP Andrew Tyrie (Chichester) if he would echo the famous "je ne regrette rien" words of former Conservative Chancellor Norman Lamont.

Lord Irvine replied: "I certainly do not think that any apologies are due.

On the contrary, I tend to side with those commentators who have said, 'three cheers for this being done in Parliament and three cheers for the House committees that decided to do

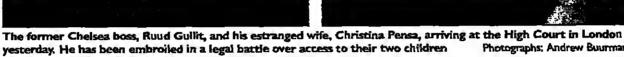
Living up to his image as one of the most imperious Lord Chancellor's of recent years, Lord Irvine swept aside suggestions that he was looking for a personal spin doctor because he had made such a hash of his own self-publicity since taking

The extent of any damage to his authority as Britain's senior law officer will be put to the test today when he unveils a fresh consultation document on proposals for reforming legal aid.

The Lord Chancellor dismissed the row about the cost of his interior decorating as a "storm in a teacup". But it has proved impossible to go ahead with plans for depriving some of the poorest people in the country of legal aid, while at the same time as spending more than half a million pounds on soft furnishings.

He will announce that he is substantially watering down the plans announced four months ago to scrap legal aid for all civil claims. It will be abolished for accident victims, who will be expected to sue with lawyers acting on a nowin, no-fee hasis. Legal aid for pursued for two hours by a pack medical negligence cases will he restricted to lawyers who





Anthrax vaccinations will be offered to British forces in the Gulf

By Ian Burrell

BRITISH forces in the Gulf will today he advised to take vaccinations against the possible use of anthrax by Iraq.

George Robertson, the Secretary of State for Defence, yesterday took the anthrax jah himself to allay fears about the safety of the vaccine.

Mr Robertson has written to the 3,500 personnel in the Gulf saying that he understands their concerns over the illnesses that struck down many who served in the last Gulf war, but that he strongly advises them to have row over the refurbishment as are specialists in the subject. I the vaccination. He stressed up, had advised him that the vac- in 1990-91 the vaccine was giv- programme will be voluntary. I good tale for down the pub.

Saddam Hussein was expected to deliver an imminent biological weapons attack.

But in his letter to those serving in Operation Bolton in the Gulf, Mr Robertson said: "While we currently judge the threat of [Saddam] using such weapons as low, we cannot be wholly certain that this will not change in the future."

forces said that the reason for the medical advisory group, which Mr Robertson has recently set

that the decision to offer the cine was safe and that it should vaccinations did not mean that be given to the Gulf forces. who could be in the region for months while United Nations resolutions on weapons inspections are being enforced.

> The United States and Canada have reached similar conclusions and both also announced yesterday that their forces serving in the Gulf are to be given anthrax vaccine.

Since 1976, 55,000 doses of . Senior Ministry of Defence anthrax vaccine have been given in Britain, ruainly to vets, and decision was that an independent only 18 people have reported minor side-effects.

But during the Gulf conflict

en in combination with a whooping cough vaccine which was designed to speed up its effects. At the same time, troops were bombarded with a wide range of other inoculations and

thousands have since become ill. MoD sources yesterday admitted that mistakes had been made during the last conflict in terms of the secrecy which surrounded the vaccine programme; and the poor

record-keeping of which jabs had been administered. Unlike in 1991, when troops were led to believe the jabs were compulsory, the new anthrax

roof caved in – but the band played on

By Andrew Buncombe

Palace

One can only guess how long Nick Howell took to get ready yesterday morning, before going to Buckingham Palace to watch his father honoured by the Queen. Sadly in the end, his efforts were completely in vain.

. While his father Keith was receiving an OBE, Mr Howell came away with six stitches in his head and with his hest suit covered in blood after a piece of plaster from a ballroom fell on him. Indeed, after all the subsequent media attention, it was certainly becoming a day when he would have liked to have looked his best.

The incident task place after Mr Howell, 28, from southwest London, went to the palace with his brother and mother to watch his father honoured for his work with the Office of Fair Trading.

"I have absolutely no idea what hit me, something came down from the sky, It was a huge shock, not what you expect to happen," he said, with a fair amount of understatement.

"Yes it was my first time in the Palace and it may well be my last. "I was ushered out so quickly I do not know what happened after that. I would like to think they just carried on." Which is exactly what they

did. The Queen, about 100ft away and busy handing out gongs, looked up, paused momentarily, and then got on with her business. The military band, in the best of traditions, stoically played on.

Palace officials helped Mr Howell out of the ballroom and waited for an ambulance, Last night they said an investigation had been launched.

"This is a terribly unfortunate and inexplicable accident. said a spokesman. . The Queen was last night be-

ing kept informed of Mr Howell's condition and invited him to a summer garden party. Mr Howell, however, re-

mained philosophical. "It has

just been a strange day - it is a

TOMORROW

■ Talk-show king Jerry Springerthere must be something nice to say about him

Forget the Oscars – art is the prize stars want to collect

The story behind the hit – why The Beatles wrote 'All you need is love'

■ Which university has the best teaching? **EDUCATION +**

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Fashion **Obituaries** Leader & letters 20-22 Unit trusts Crosswords 28 & The Eye, 10 TV & radio The Eye, 12



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Today's forecast South Wales, the Affallands and southern England will start overcast with rain, beau

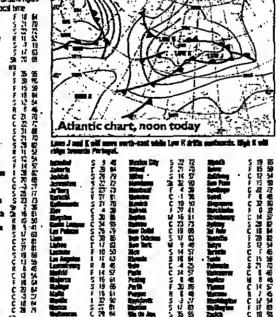
Outlook for the

British Isles weather not recent available ligate at moon local table C cloudy, Clatear Filter Egilog Hahaze Mimid, Brain, Scaliny, St. seet, St. Studioures 3

Thursday will be bright but cold with surmy spells and worthy showers the showers mostly or the north and west. On Freday, nam and malder as well spread from the south-west, but Scotland will stay cold enth snow in the south spreading numberates, like sno later to make to seek at more southwist south

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WISE

logical Organization.

After: "El Niño continues to dominate ... severe storms in certain areas ... Kenya hard hit by flooding ... 1.500 people cooler than usual from the mid have died of Malaria ... ", comes to east Pacific, while the western



I have tried to keep track in this column with the effects of El Niño, but its true magnitude only came home to me with one line in the latest El Niño update ful enough to change the diissued by the World Meteoro-



ceived five times its normal annual rainfall in a single day." But when the Earth's climate

has received such a hig jolt, what happens next? There are three possibilities:

El Niño will drag on even longer than expected (which is unlikely because there are already strong signs of its fading): it will go away and everything will return to normal; or it will be followed by its sister, La Niña, which will play a totally different game of havoc with next winter's weather.

What happened with El (I feel we've known him long enough to be on first name terms) was that warm waters in the tropical Pacific heated the air, producing currents powerrection of the jet stream.

When La Niña occurs, she produces an opposite, but potentially no less drastic, effect. Waters near the equator become

the startling line; "Talara Peru re- Pacific temperatures rise. This is accompanied by high pressure in the west and low pressure in the east, resulting in storms that blow up into North America.

Roughly speaking, the areas of the United States that have been having warm weather and even droughts this winter can expect a good deal of rain if it is followed by La Niña, while this year's rain-soaked locations will he dry.

At a Workshop on Seasonal Climate in Singapore last month, experts agreed that a return to normal was the most likely of the Post-Niño scenar- . . ios, hut rated it as only a 50 per cent chance. The next most likely was La Niña at 35 per cent, with a prolonged El Niño trailing at 15 per cent. The fact that they are express such predictions of vastly different weather conditions in terms of :: percentage expectancies shows how difficult long-term predic- ...

It's an ill El that blows no one any good.

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SHALL DUSBESS EDITION



for UK newspapers in the first half of 1997.

3/NEWS

In a nether region between art and porn

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Oscars - artis the prize stars Delico collect

astonishment to the CPS's advice to the police. "We will not voluntarily destroy this book," said Dr Peter Knight, vice-chancellor, "I am expecting to meet the police soon with the university lawyers. If there is a prosecution and the courts rule that the book should be destroyed, then we will, reluctantly obey the ruling. The work is of a high artistic standard and would certainly oot 'deprave or corrupt' under the Act. It is unusual, yes, but not erotic and not pornography." Susan Sandon, Jonathan Cape marketing director, said: "This has been in print since 1992 and we certainly have no plans to withdraw it. It is freely available. We have not been contacted by the police yet, so we cannot say what action, if any, we plan to take." However, it is

charges over

photographs

A UNIVERSITY and a firm of publishers are

controversial photographer Robert Mapplethorpe.

Birmingham and executives at Jonathan Cape are

the book when they meet officers from the West

Midlands Paedophile and Pornography Unit.

Mapplethorpe, a copy of which is in the British

police last October. They had been alerted by a

by a student for a thesis on "Fine Art versus ...

"deprave or corrupt" under the 1959 Obscené

Publications Act and advised the police that they had

grounds to ask the university to voluntarily destroy it.

work shows two men "fisting". His work has been

shown at most major galleries in the western world,

including the Institute of Cootemporary Arts, the .

London, and is highly regarded by most art critics.

The university and the publishers reacted with

understood that the company would resist any attempt

to make it destroy stocks and abandon reprints. West

Jonathan Cape. A confrootation seems unavoidable.

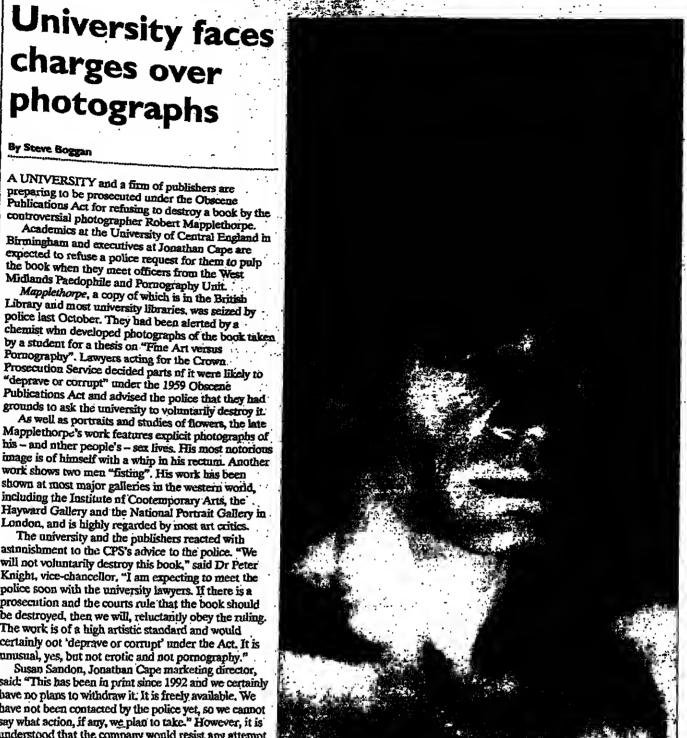
Midlands Police said officers would be talking to

Pornography". Lawyers acting for the Crown. Prosecution Service decided parts of it were likely to

Library and most university libraries, was seized by

expected to refuse a police request for them to pulp

By Steve Boggan



Mapplethorpe self-portrait: one of the less explicit images in the book

"DEALING WITH sexuality is always difficult, and it would be easy to write Robert off as an exhibitionist. But all he did was to reveal to us a part of our lives: it was just another kitchen sink, but this one had gold taps and designer handcuffs." Perhaps if the men of the West Midlands Paedophile and Pornography squad had read this description of Robert Mapplethorpe's work they would not now be engaged in an exercise in book-burning, writes Steve Boggan.

The words were written by the late film director Derek Jarman shortly before he, like Mapplethorpe, died of Aids. What Mapplethorpe was doing with his images of black and white men embracing, of a bullwhip up his back-side, of the sado-masochists who invited him into their bedrooms, of a penis in a polyester suit, was chronicling real life, albeit in a world most of us never inhabit. Whenever the argument of art versus pomography arises. Mapplethorpe's name is always thrown into the debate, with as many supporters as detractors. Yet few would dispute the quality of his work and materials and even those who find his images unpelatable rarely argue that his intention was to titillate in the way of pornography.

Yesterday, those who like him and those who don't were united in their astonishment over the police's decision to seize the book. "Bizarre is the only way to describe this," said Emma Dexter, exbitions director at the Institute of Contemporary Arts, which gave him his first British solo exhibition in the early 1980s. "Art has to be about the society in which we live and the setting in which he lived had some profoundly hypnotic images of desire and sexuality. Whether you like what he and his friends did is another matter, but I don't find it pornographic."

His friends ranged from Andy Warhol to Patti Smith, the singer and poet with whom he lived for a while in his New York loft. (He was bisexual.) Born in New York City in 1946. Mapplethorpe studied at the Pratt Institute in Brooklyn in the 1960s, He first began drawing the attention of the avant-garde set with a series of underground films including one in which he starred entitled "Robert Having His Nipple Pierced" in 1971.

IN THE NEWS ROBERT MAPPLETHORPE

He dabbled in sculpture but gradmally became consumed by photography. In the early 1970s he took pictures with Polaroid cameras, cutting up the images and mixing them with pictures from pornographie magazines. He had his first exhibition in 1972.

His early work was supported by the wealthy American photograph collector Sam Wagstaff, who became his lover and patron. Later, however, everyone who was anyone paid to have their portrait taken by Mapplethorpe, usually at around \$10,000 a sitting.

But it was his work exploring the freakish side of sexuality and his fas-

HORROGEAT HAYWARD

Alapping pe always courted conscovers; in 1996 the Hayward

Gallery withdrew two pictures from
an entitation after consulting police.

One was of a

the year old girl wearing a dress but no underwear sitting with her legs open; the other was of two men engaged in the homosexua practice of "fisting". Es-

(above, right), chairwoman of Child-Line, described the picture of the girl, Rosie, as "horrific" although it drew no complaints when it was exhibited in New York

A KICK FROM CLICKING During a BBC Arena programme accompanying his exhibition at the National Portrait Gallery in 1988, Mapplethorpe said he got a lack from pornographic images that he never got from art. He said that was

cination with black subjects, who nften became lovers, that earned him his reputation for controversy. One of his pictures, entitled "Man in Polyester Suit", features a black penis hanging from the trousers of a business suit.

Many of his images featured apparently violent sado-masochistic sex, although Jarman remembered him as a gentle lover. After his death from Aids in 1989 at the age of 43, Patti Smith described her relationship with him as "intense and bizarre", likening him to a devil. His famous self-portrait has him growing devil's horns.

"I think that he was a skilful photographer and some of his work had a certain artistic quality but a good deal of it was worthless in my opinion," said Martin Gayford, art critic for The Spectotor. "Nevertheless, I would not want to see it persecuted by the civil authorities. I thought we were above burning books io this country."

what led him to make art from pornographic images but he did not see the end result as pornographic.

MONKEY BUSINESS Mapplethorpe was set up with a camera and studio by the millionaire photography lover Sam Wagstaff, according to the late film director Derek jarman. Jarman told of how, during an early meeting. Wagstaff gave Mapplethorpe a diamond pin in the shape of a monkey, it remained pinned to his lapel until he discovered that it was worth a fortune. Jarman believed it had been made by Fabergé and described it as an example of how he felt Mapplethorpe had

A FAUSTIAN PACT "There is a closed room in-Robert's work. Something even secret to Robert," wrote Jarman. "His life was, to me, a Chinese box. You opened the first and there was another box inside. And the last contained a wad of dollar bills field in the hands of some of the most powerful men in the American art world. Robert's story is the story of Faust."

Family of murdered doctor launch civil action against her ex-boyfriend

By Kate Watson-Smyth

THE FAMILY of a young doctor who was murdered more than three years ago yesterday launched an unprecedented High Court civil actioo against her former boyfriend whom they suspect of killing her.

The body of Joan Francisco, a 27-year-old gynaecologist, was found wearing only knickers and a T-shirt in her flat in north-west London, on Boxing Day in 1994. She was strangled with a vacuum cleaner cord.

Following a lengthy police investigation, the Crown Prosecutioo Service ruled there was insufficient evidence to bring a she may have been leaving the prosecution, but now her family have brought a civil action against Anthooy Diedrick, claiming assault and battery leading to her murder.

It is believed to be the first time a civil case has been brought against a suspect before there has been any criminal prosecution linked to the

Patrick O'Connor QC, for the Francisco family, said Mr Diedrick, who was a former hoyfriend from six years before,

verted obsession" for Ms Francisco which led to her death.

"That obsession intensified in the months before Christmas 1994 and reached a crisis on the day of her murder." he said.

Ms Francisco, who was always conscious of her personal security, had been due to fly out to California to visit her sisters, Margrette and Celia, on the day she died.

Mr O'Connor said that when Mr Diedrick heard she was leaving for the United States he assumed that she was leaving

long-term or permanently. "It is this belief by him that country for such a length of time that led to his harbouring a growing sense of crisis in his obsession and the need for some kind of dramatic confrontation or gesture on the morning of

Boxing Day." Margrette told the court that she met Mr Diedrick in the late 1980s when he visited Los-Angeles with her sister and described how he "got inin a. seething rage - like he was go-

ing to erupt". It really shook me up and

harboured a "violent and per- I was very disturbed by the anger and hostility he displayed just because of a difference of opinion." she said

Mr O'Connor said it was no coincidence that Joan was murdered only hours before her departure for the United States.

"Anthony Diedrick knew about her departure and seems to have imagined that he may never see her again. There is nobody else for whom that day and this hour had any such signifi-

Mr Diedrick, a computer studies graduate, had a relationship with Joan which started in February 1987 and was ended by her at Christmas 1988. The court heard that Mr Diedrick became obsessed with

Ms Francisco. On one occasion he smashed his way through a patio door and chased Joan and a male friend, who he threatened to kill, upstairs where they locked themselves in a room, the court

Mr Diedrick told police that he felt compelled to go to the house and spoke in "apocalyptic terms" of how he had wanted to kill the friend and would





Murder victim Joan Francisco (left) and Anthony Diedrick (right) Photograph: Photonews

1994 he saw Ms Francisco in a revived. A week before her together." death he pushed a note for her through the door of her moth-

we'll ever see each other or of view of his absession he outcharge. The case continues.

rather die than go to prison. In speak to each other again. It couldn't be writing those words." would have been nice if we nightchih and his obsession was could have had a last few words alibi that he spent Christmas

Mr O'Connor said: "Those words speak volumes. Unless It said: "It's unlikely that apocalyptic terms from the point March 1994, but released with-

Mr Diedrick claimed as an Day night and Boxing Day morning at his flat before going to his mother's for the day at Tony Diedrick is thinking in 10am. He was arrested in

'Full Monty' hit by plagiarism writ

By Tim Cornwell in Los Angeles

THE MAKERS of The Full Monty, celebrated world-wide for its original Yorkshire wit, are being sucd for plagiarism by two New Zealand playwrights, A suit filed in Los Angeles claims the film's setting, premise and some character development were based no a 1987 play "Ladies Night". A lawyer for Fox Searchlight Pictures, the small films subsidiary of Rupert Murdoch's News Corporation which financed the film, yesterday dismissed the suit nut of hand. "It seems like these days, almost every film has this

kind of claim," said Bert Fields. But there was speculation that the suit could dampen the film's chances of collecting an Oscar. It has Oscar nominations, for best picture, best director, best score, and best original screenplay.

Playwrights Andrew Mc-Carten and Stephen Sinclair are asking for all of Fox's profits on the film, which cost \$3.5m (£2.1m) and has reaped \$200 m where it could have been seen original piece of work".

by the film's creative team. The specific similarities seemed, on the face of it, weak.

They included the presence of a sole black character, hints that another is homosexual. and the failing marriage of a third. But the two authors said they will post a copy oo a World Wide Web site for the public to "judge for themselves". In recent weeks The Full

Monty's makers have been conducting what amounts to a typical Oscar campaign: print ads in trade newspapers and media interviews with the main players. They help raise the film's profile for the roughly 5,000 voting members of the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and

Mr Fields suggested the suit was deliberately timed to raise doubts just as Oscar ballots are being mailed for voting that concludes a week before the awards show on 23 March. Where have these people

been the last six or seven months?" he asked. The suit certainly strikes at

the play'a heart. Monty is considered a long shot for best picio ticket sales. Their play ture or director, against the likes opened in several British re- of Titanic, Producer Uberto gional theatres after proving a Pasolini told the Los Angeles hit in New Zealand, they allege, Times that it was a "wholly



Corruption revealed in Labour council

By Anthony Bevins Folitical Edition

A LABOUR chief whip on Peterborough council ahused party discipline to drive through corrupt planning schemes, it was reported vesterday.

Jerry White, the local government omhudsman, referred in a report to two Labour councillors - man and wife - who were jailed in 1995 on charges connected with two cases of maladministration.

A Labour spokesman said last night that as soon as the matter had come to the attention of the party, the pair had been "chopped off at the knees, and told goodbye".

Two complaints were made to the ombudsman, about the way in which the council had handled planning applications. Mr White has urged the couneil to compensate the claimants for any reduction in the value of their homes resulting from improper developments.

The ombudsman's office said in a press notice: "In each case the ombudsman found maladministration by the council for the planning sub-committee the failure of former Councillor when the disputed applications John Dalgarno and former were passed - against the advice Councillor Sally Dalgarno to declare their interest. The interest arose through Mr Dalgarno's process. business dealings with the site developer and through a corrupt arrangement to secure planning permission for projects for that same developer."

He also found that the way in which party discipline had er residents as a consequence been use to decide planning ap- of any planning permission plications amounted to malad-

Mr Dalgarno was the chief whip at the time of the decision which was the subject of the managing director of Tarmac complaint. Mr White said: "In Contract Housing.

these cases, the abuse of the party discipline put the whole Labour majority group and the city's planning system into the hands of the councillors Dalgarno and the developer."

Police were called after complaints by Labour and Conservative councillors to the chief planning officer in 1991. The two councillors and the developer were found guilty in June 1995.

Mrs Dalgarno was convicted of receiving the construction of a conservatory from the developer, named as "Mr Sherhourne", as an inducement for supporting planning applications. Mr Dalgarno was found guilty on the conservatory count, along with charges of receiving a Ford Orion from another defendant, and of receiving £3,500 for backing planning applications.

Mr White's report said that because councillors should decide planning applications on the facts, it was inappropriate to impose party discipline on the planning process.

But Mr Dalgarno was chief whip of the majority group on of officers - and party discipline was imposed throughout the

Mr White also said: "Although, given the passage of time, it may be difficult to do so, I hope that the council will now go on to consider whether injustice has been caused to othgranted in similar circumstances to those I have identified."

The former councillor John Dalgarno is not John Dalgarno.



Service with a smile: Sara Kippel tends to the lunchtime clientele at the All Bar One café bar in Regent Street, central London, yesterday

Photograph: David Rose

Service without a smile as restaurant staff contemplate end to tips of the trade

AT the All Bar One café bar in Regeni Street central London, yesterday the implications of a possible end to tipping as we know it, were beginning to sink

John Mills, who works as an importer, was having lunch with his wife Gill, a recruitment consultant. Mr Mills said: "I hate the idea. We go to a lot of Argentina who works at All Bar

restaurants already where there One to finance her degree, said the bill and if you get terrible service you have to have a major altercation not to pay it."

Mrs Mills also preferred to tip at will, but for a different reason. 'If you get really good service you like to tip more. We under-

stand waiters depend on tips." Their waitress Patricia Movillo, a student from

is a service charge included in she liked to be tipped for good service. "It is good to have tips because you get cash and that is nice pocket money. If you give better service you are given a tip

-it's common sense," she said. When she started at All Bar One a year ago she carned £3.60 an hour. That has now gone up to £4.60 and waiters can earn up to £6 in tips on a good lunch

Even so, waitress Helen tionary tips. He said: "It is a bet-Walker - who earns £4.10 an ter way as far as the client is conhour-said she would prefer an cerned. You should be able to increased steady wage. "I don't get up and go without the emmake an awful lot in tips," she barrassment of trying to decide said. "You can't really rely on how much to tip. You don't have them. Sometimes you expect to to impress the girlfriend, and if

straight hourly rate." is ment in scrapping discre- meal was expensive. He said:

get a lot and you end up with the waitress pulls faces at you, nothing. I would rather have a you can tell her to get stuffed."

Joe Green, a management wine business, also thinks there service meant a costly tip if the

"The fact that you are paying more or less shouldn't change the service from the waiter."

His server Nick Hamley, an Australian, who has been working at All Bar One for three months to fund his travels, said: "I think it is a little hit unfair to end tipping. The hospitality industry is almost based on tips Stephen Neil, who runs a consultant, said compulsory and service. You go out of your way to look after people and it's

Estu Growt



Sunday's rural march: the number taking part is disputed

Countryside march 'half claimed size'

A STUDY of Sunday's Countryside March in London has concluded 142,259 people took Turn-out at 250,000. A part, half the total claimed by organisers. Researchers from Napier University in Edinburgh set up a monitoring station atongside the march route in added. The technique was in-Piccadilly and used video equipment to count marchers.

March organisers said 284,500 people took part in the day the countryside came to town. The Edinburgh team took video grab pictures of other demonstrations. People marchers at three-minute in- have been assessing the level of tervals throughout the five-support for these events using hour event and found marchers were travelling at 1.07 metres a time there is a major demonsecond and passing the monitoring point at the rate of eight about the numbers."

route contained a mean of fact that the crowd was carefully 27.49 people in the 100 video controlled and that the "flow grabs, with the flow of marchers rate and march speed were altering only slightly during the much more consistent than event. The researchers, from the might have been anticipated". university's computer studies department, calculated the the walkers may have dropped numbers on the march were be- out of the march soon after the tween 133,118 and 151,400.

Alliance said the researchers route - and thus not been countneeded to "check their method- ed. ology". Spokeswoman Janet George said eight monitors had commissioned by the Campaign counted each line of marchers for the Protection of Hunted as they left the start. "We have Animals, which was opposed to done our own very, very care- the march.

ful count," she said. "[The Edinhurgh researchers | are wrong

Scotland Yard estimated the spokesman said it was the guesswork of experienced officers. "It's very difficult and is always an approximation," he spired by methods used hy marine scientists to count seals on

Mathematician Russell Leaper said the team hoped to use their methods to measure very, very poor evidence. Every stration there is a hig argument

The researchers said their A 3.7m wide strip of the work had been helped by the

It was admitted that some of start, before reaching the mon-Yesterday the Countryside itoring point - 2km down the

The Edinburgh study was

Chip van worker survives gunman's murder bid

A Catholic man survived a murder hid in Northern Ireland yesterday when a gunman's weapon jammed. Security sources say the attempted shooting in Toombridge,

Co Antrim, bore all the hallmarks of a loyalist attack. The victim was working in a mobile chip van on Hillhead Road around midday when a man armed with a handgun ap-

proached and attempted unsuccessfully to fire shots, police said. Irish Army experts yesterday carried out three controlled explosions on a massive car bomb ready for use across the horder in Northern Ireland, the second such device in a week to be linked to the break-away Republican group the Continu-

30 inmates shared drug needle

As many as 30 women inmates at a Wiltshire jail have shared a single needle to mject drugs including heroin, it was revealed yesterday. An inspection report added that the sharing of needles is widespread at Erlestoke jail, near Salisbury Plain.

Prison officials had provided inmates with cleaning fluid to keep injecting equipment sterile, but have withdrawn the service. Sharing needles appears to have caused a rise in the number of prisoners infected with hepatitis C. Sir David Ramsbotham, the Chief Inspector of Prisons, said in a report: "...The use of injectable drugs such as heroin was increasing. Received intelligence showed very considerable sharing of injecting equipment with up to 30 people sharing one syringe and needle.

Ecclestone accepts his £1 m

The Formula One chief Bernie Ecclestone has cashed the £tm cheque Labour sent him in November, a party spokesman said

The cheque covered a donation which Labour returned on the advice of Lord Neill, chairman of the committee on standards in public life. That followed the controversy over Tony Blair's decision to sanction an exemption from a ban on tobacco advertising for Formula One racing.

Mr Ecclestone, a millionaire, received the cheque on 25 No-

vember but said he did not want the money back. Labour was to give the money to charity if he had not cashed it by 25 May.

Paramedic cleared of rape

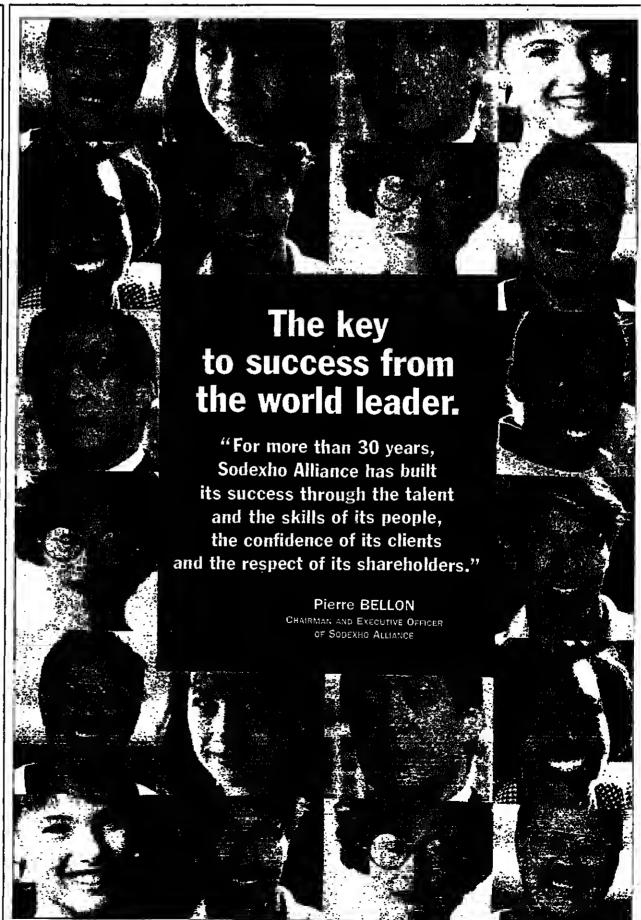
An ambulance paramedic accused of raping three former patients was cleared of seven charges by a Crown Court jury. It was alleged that Gordon Thompson, 35, raped the women after picking them up on 999 calls, then returning to their homes claiming he was making a follow-up call. But a jury at Oxford Crown Court cleared Thompson of five counts of rape and two of indecent assault after a five-day trial.

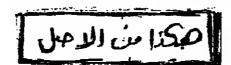
The jury is still considering verdicts on one further count of rape and one of indecent assault. They were told that the women were alt vulnerable and had alcohot or drug problems.

Murder case son can appeal

The younger son of "domineering" teacher Eve Howells, who was battered to death by her elder son after subjecting the boys to years of abuse, was yesterday granted leave to appeal against his conviction of taking part in the murder.

The Court of Appeal said John Howells, 17, had grounds for arguing that the judge at his Leeds Crown Court trial a year ago had wrongly withdrawn from the jury the question of whether he had acted under provocation.





Children's cartoons harmless, says ITV study

CONCERN that children are addicted to high action, violent cartoons is groundless, accord.

The survey, covering more cartoons is groundless, accord.

The survey, covering more convertes a sponsorship, and advertisers watching. However, even shows that children can be as had been warred about using the children can be as the convertes animated. Report though some of the children discerning in their viewing as the technique.

Most prefer factual and drama programmes, the Independent Television Comments and what needed to be encountable and satellite and those who nothing else was on.

Crazy?", is the first in the UK viewing because they are short Flinestones, Scooby Doo and

dent Television Commission aged was watching a wide range saw only temestrial television. of programmes. "Cartoons are The report, "Cartoon an important part of children's tion between cartoons like The

ing to research published Chambers, said television was and two whole families, found no

to draw on the views of children and easy to dip in and out of," Rugrats and action animations themselves, looking at those she said. They're more relax- such as Street Sharks, Spider-

boys aged five to seven enjoyed one of many complementary ac-difference between the attitudes action cartoons and many

> The report found the most popular cartoons were those like Tom and Jerry which included slanstick humour.

The ITC also found a difference between "good scary" aggressive and "dark" pro-

The first category was enjoyed found them disturbing they reby those who participated in the alised they were simply cartoons, that nobody got hurt and report, often because there was that the good characters always excitement and humour, but few enjoyed the latter, which often won. And for younger viewers included the use of violent the more frightening, complex plots were more likely to go over

their heads, boring them rather Ms Chambers said some of the mothers were shocked by the than upsetting them. Peter Rogers, ITC chief ex-

Another ITC report suggested young children could be disturbed by "morphing" images in advertising. The computer technique, which transforms people into creatures, has been used in adverts by Peugeot and Irn Bru. Frank Willis, ITC which television is most used and director of advertising and

A third ITC study released yesterday, on television as a teaching aid, found that those students who enjoyed learning from television were more likely to value reading as a learning method. English and reading were among the subjects for

Dame Edna takes a bundle of cash from Jeffrey Archer

By David Lister Arts News Editor

DAME EDNA EVERAGE is be-

ing bankrolled by Jeffrey Archer. The unlikely combination - they have apparently been friends for 20 years - presented themselves at Lord Archer's penthouse flat in London yesterday, complete with its Lowrys and Monets, to announce that Lord Archer will be putting up the £500,000 for Dame Edna's next West End show.

In a press conference by the Dame which turned into a monologue almost as long and just as funny as one of her shows, she broke with the usual convention of actorly solidarity.

She would show herself on stage, she said, to be "a kind of upmarket Jackson, a well-dressed Diana Rigg".

time tell the story of Dame Edna's childhood, youth and marriage to illfated Norm, as well as his subse-

cident has been set to music and dance - that's unique in the history of theatre," Dame Edna said.

"Funnily enough, since he passed



Backer: Jeffrey Archer

Edna wins a "lovely mother" prize in Melbourne and it is sponsored by "The Daily Murdoch".

The second half will be Dame Edna with old sidekick Madge, who has threatened to rival Lord Archer in the running for London's mayor.

. Lord Archer said he and fellow Judi Dench, an attractive Glenda art lover Mr Humphries went back 20 years and he had asked the peer if he could launch the show in his The all-new show will for the first sumptuous riverside apartment.

He had not seen all the show, including songs by Kit Hesketh-Harvey and James McConnel, But he quent unfortunate medical history. said: "You will not feel surprised if My husband's first urological ac- there are some fairly well-known tunes with different words. And you will not be surprised if the audience is invited to sing along."

Edna - the Spectacle Returns has away, his prostate has never been in its première at the Yvonne Arnaud Theatre in Guildford, Surrey, a Dame Edna's alter ego Barry week tomorrow. It stays there until Humphries will pop up in the show it moves to the Theatre Royal in the



to play Rupert Murdoch: Dame - West End on Saturday 21 March. Dame for a laugh: 'Housewife megastar' Dame Edna Everage is preparing to throw a spotlight on her past in a brand new show

Photgraph: Brian Harris

Successful Growth and Favorable Outlook.

Contract Food and Managers of Service Remote Site Management - Service Vouchers and Cards - Leisure Services

Excerpts from Chairman Pierre Bellon's address to the Annual Meeting of Shareholders, February 24, 1998

1996/1997 FINANCIAL HIGHLIGHTS Over the year, consolidated sales increased by 18 percent to FRF 29.5 billion, broken own as follows:

Operating margin widered to 4.7 from 4.5 percent, continuing the steady growth

trend of the past five years.

Group state of Consolidated net income totaled FRF 540 million, a 34 percent increase from the previous year's Group share of consolidated net income before non-recurring items. Acceptant exchange rates, the increase came to 29 percent.

RECENT DEVELOPMENTS Last September 30, Sodenho Alliance and Marriotz International, Inc. agreed to combine their food and Management Services businesses in the United States and Carada in a new company known as Soderho Marriott Services, Inc. To finance the transaction, we increased our capital by PRF 2 billion in November by issuing 835,770 new shares at a price of FRF 2,400 per share. Shareholders responded very

Societio Marriott Services, Inc. will be North America's leading provider of Food and Management Services, with more than 4,800 operating accounts, FBF 24 biffion in sales and 100,000 associates. Its shares will be listed on the New York Stock Exchange. The merger is taking place in a positive environment and should be completed at the

Separately, on October 31, Sodexho-Gardner Merchant acquired Marriott International's Food and Management Services business in the United Kingdom.

The creation of Sodesho Marriott Services, Inc. represents an ecceptional opportunity for our Company. Although we led the Food and Management Services market in Europe and the rest of the world prior to the merges, we ranked only fourth in North America, for behind the market leader. With Sodewho Marriott Services, Inc., we will be number one in North America, thereby strengthening our global leadership.

* Once again. Sodenho Affiance has gained new scope and depth. Over a full year, i.e., in fiscal year 1998/1999, we will have around FRF 56.5 billion in sales, more than FRF 3 billion in operating profit and more than 210,000 associates. In five years, we have multiplied sales by five, operating profit by nine and the number of associates by four.

* We have also changed our profile,

with Food and Management Services accounting for a larger share of our revenue Stream in 2000, this business will generate more than 90 percent of our sales and around 85 percent of operating profit. In addition, we are becoming increasingly international. In 2000, more than 85 percent of our sales will be made outside France.

* Our debt has increased, limiting our ability to mail: (ew acquisitions. After three years of alliances and major acquisitions - Garcher Merchant, Partera, Soderino Marmott Services, Irt.-, Soderino Alliance will now enter a phase of consolidation. During this period, we will focus on developing internal synergy and enhancing organic growth: Synergy will be created through the cross-lettifization of skills and the development

of economies of scale in the country operations, with the support of our global network. To do this, we will reduce purchasing costs, optimize restaurant working methods, negotiate international agreements with global suppliers, rationals management structures, redeploy sales forces, lorge agreements with global customers, eliminate redundant development costs, optimize new product and CANONICA, CHILDREN INCLUDES, and share IT development and training expenses. throughout our corporate community, we will expand efforts to share and spread ignorative ideas, management methods and quality programs. All our businesses enjoy strong potential for growth especially Food and Management Services. We need to focus on organic growth, whose return on nent exceeds 50 percent, in-depth strategic studies undertaken in France, Italy, the US and the UK are helping us to increase sales and earnings faster. They are also providing methodologies that will be transferred to other complies. Thanks to steady predictable growth in cash flow, we will recover our full investment capacity in a little more than three years and be able to make new acquisitions.

* The current year will be one of transition

Based on currently available data and in light of the capital increase, earnings per share should increase by approximately six percent in fiscal year 1997/1998. Over the next three fiscal years, earnings per share, after amortization of goodwall, are expected to grow by an average 28 percent a year.

Since our Company was founded in 1966, it has grown into an international enterprise, but its strategic mission has remained the same:

First, to continuously improve client and customer satisfaction. This means listering carefully to their needs, diversifying our food services, developing a comprehensive offering of other services, and pursuing our strategic commitment to quality and innovation.

Second, to develop our human capital. We emphase the emergence of entrepreneurs by decembralizing decision making and responsibility. We instill a corporate culture in that recognizes individual performance at all levels. We want all our team members around the world to take pride in belonging to the Societho Alliance community. Third, to meet the expectations of our shareholders. This means increasing earnings per share, leeping you informed and, to the extent possible, getting you involved in the acquiring development of your Company.

I am convinced that the mutual bond of loyalty and trust between our customers, our

in today's global marketplace, we derive important competitive advantage from our independence, our global reach, the quality of our teams, and our excellent financial

As you can see, our outlook is favorable. On behalf of the Board and yourselves, I would like to thank all of our many associates, whose professionalism, dedication and efficiency are each day helping to ensure Sodesho Aliance's success around the world.

the dividend for listal year 1996/1997 has been increased 35 percent to FRE 35.00

before associated tax credit (FRF 52.50 including tax credit). It will be paid on March 5, 1998. Total payout amounts to FRF 263 million, corresponding to 49 percent of consolidated met income less minority interests.



Sodexhe Alliance worldwide leader in food and management services For further information, please contact: Raphael DUBRULE - Corporate Secretary Phone: +33 1 30 85 74 74 - Rec: +33 1 30 85 50 05 - Internet: http://www.sodedia.com

Virgin's tilting trains herald railway travel of the future

Transport Correspondent

A £1.85bn order for a new generation of tilting trains on Britain's railways could shrink the journey time between London and Birmingham to little more than an hour, according to plans unveiled by Virgin Trains yesterday.

The company's plans for more than 130 new trains conpled with a £2bn upgrade on the West Coast service between London and Scotland will cut more than a third off some journey times for its 23 million passengers.

The first trains go into service in 2000 and two years later Virgin aims to have its full fleet up and running.

By 2005 the time taken from London to Glasgow will be cut from 5 hours 20 minutes to 3 hours 50 minutes. On the Cross-Birmingham to Bristol will



Mr Branson with a model of the train Photograph; David Rose

come down from the current 1 hour 27 minutes to 1 hour eight minutes by 2003.

The most ambitious proposals, for the company's West Coast route, would see 55 new trains capable of 160mph traversing the line from London to Scotland. More than 1,000 British jobs at GEC Alsthom's Washwood Heath facility in Country service the trip from Birmingham will be secured by the announcement.

Another £850m will be spent on 77 trains - 43 of which can tilt - for the company's Cross-Country franchise.

Virgin said the twists and turns of the network meant that tilting trains - manufactured by Canadian firm Bombardier - were the only way to bring down travelling times.

Richard Branson, chairman of Virgin Group, said the train deals would herald nothing less less than 60 minutes.

than a "revolution in long-distance travel by rail in Britain." Mr Branson is keen to dispel doubts about his train service, which suffered last year

"We are now seeing 90 per cent of services running on time." said Mr Branson, adding that passenger numbers were "up 13 per cent in 11 months".

from poor punctuality.

With a billion-pound stockmarket floatation planned this summer, Virgin need to placate some City analysts who remain sceptical of the company's ability to persuade passengers to use its trains. Virgin already have a deal with Railtrack, owner of the nation's track and signalling. to spend £2bn on the dilapidated West Coast. But Brian Barrett, Virgin Trains' chief executive, said a possible further upgrade could see trains travelling at 160mph - which would reduce the 1 hour 40 minutes from London to Birmingham to

M&S victory over child labour libel

By Rob Brown Media Editor

ST MICHAEL'S halo was restored yesterday when Marks & Spencer won an apology and £50,000 libel damages from Granada Television in the High

The ITV station was also ordered to contribute £650,000 towards the retail giant's legal costs over a World in Action documentary which alleged that M&S knew of child exploitation in a Moroccan factory used by a supplier and misled customers by selling foreign-made garments labelled "Made in the UK".

Granada accepted the verdict and made an unreserved apology. But it claimed later that the central thrust of the will always take firm action to documentary, transmitted in protect our reputation."

January 1996 and entitled "St Michael: Has the halo slipped?", had not been discredited by the ruling.

Charles Tremayne, controller of factual programmes, said the programme had proven that some 13 and 14-year-olds were employed in the factory and that a consignment of pyiamas made there had been mislabelled "Made in the UK" by its Northern Ireland-based supplier. Desmonds.

We never intended to give the impression that M&S knew of these practices and we don't accept that the programme gave such an impression," he

Sir Richard Greenbury chairman of M&S, said: "We

Terms of endearment fall foul of PC Britons

EXPRESSIONS such as "love", "duck" or "chuck" are politically incorrect and should be outlawed, according to a survey released yesterday.

Almost half the 1,000 people questioned said they objected to being called "dear" by occopie they met on a formal ba-

sis - such as dentists, receptionists and tradesmen. But 72 per cent of those questioned did not feel the same way about their use by nurses and said they were hap-

py for staff in caring professions to use pet names. According to the poll, car-

ried out by NOP Solutions for Bella magazine, bosses and police officers were strongly criticised for using terms of endearment.

The strongest objectors to

pet names were women. especially 15- to 24-year-olds. A total of 63 per cent in that age group said they were offended by tradesmen calling

them "love". This compares with 36 per cent of women over the age of 65 who are generally more tolerant, the survey found.

Several organisations have already banned their staff from using pet names. Staff at Kings Mill Hospital. Sutton in Ashfield. Nottinghamshire, have been banned from using pet names to address patients.

And switchboard staff at Leeds Council must not address callers as "love", even though Bella's survey shows that Yorkshire people were the least likely to be upset by the use of

Wonder wake-up pill aids alertness

A WAKE-UP pill that increases alertness and boosts memory in people who are sleep-deprived was launched yesterday. It is more efeffects of amphetamine-based action times in the sleep-deprived. stimulants. But it will not be available to party-goers, students or armies preparing for a long march - yet.

Modafinil is a new pharmacological compound with a unique ef- addictive. Yet tests oo normal volfect on the brain that is not fully understond. It has been licensed in the UK as a treatment for nar-rebound depression or sleepiness. colepsy, a rare disorder marked by an intense and overwhelming need to sleep that can strike at any time. Surveys show a third of people get blamed on the invention of electricity. By extending the waking day. modafinil could provide the phararea of narcolepsy. If we wanted to maceutical equivalent of the electric

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modafinil appears to target the hypothalamus, the area of the brain thought to be responsible for wakefulness. Tests in normal volunteers have shown it boosts cognitive perfective than coffee but lacks the side formance, especially memory, and re-

> Its main advantage over amphetamines is that it does not produce the euphoria associated with those drugs and is thought not to be unteers show it can keep people going through the night without causing

Dr Colin Markland, medical director of Cephalon UK, which is marketing the drug, to be called Provigil, in Britain, said there were no plans less sleep than they need, which is to explore its potential as an alert-

"All our activities have been in the seek another indication for the drug we would have to go back and con-

Unlike amphetamines, which duct other studies." Military organstimulate the nervous system, isations in Fraoce, where the drug was first licensed in 1994, the US and Britain are understood to have shown interest. There would be an obvious military advantage in a pill that could help armies fight through the day and march through the

> Dr Markland that in the four years the drug had been available in France there had been no evidence of abuse but this would be monitored lo Britain. It is available on prescription only and costs £60 for 30 tablets of 100g.

The normal dose for treating narcolepsy would be 200g to 400g a day, costing up to almost £3,000 a year. If proved safe and effective, modafinil might become a treatment for jet-lag or for disrupted sleep caused by shift work. But by far its higgest potential market could be in the treatment of insomnia - by preventing sleep during the day and thus promoting it at night.



Rescued from addiction: Graham Hardy ended up in a clinic after the original treatment for his narcolepsy

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6 It's hard to beat but I'm starting to get there now 🤊

GRAHAM HARDY was given a hard time by his teachers. Jeremy Laurance writes. When he fell asleep in class they would berate him for staying up too late, "Everyone thought I was lazy," he said.

Later, oo a first aid course, he dropped off each time he sal down. He would wake a few minntes later, often without realising he had been asleep. A friend said he was the most laidback persoo he had ever met.

He was finally diagnosed, at the age of 17, after his GP referred him to hospital in Glasgow. Doctors told him he had narcolepsy and prescribed amphetamines to keep him awake.

The attacks of overwhelming to 15 minutes, can occur in the

At first the drugs helped. Then he got used to them and had to increase the dose. "You need more and more and more. I was never given a break from them as I should have. I became addicted," He finished up in a clinic having to be weaned off the treatment.

Mr Hardy transferred to Edinhurgh Royal Infirmary which specialises in treating narcolepsy and for the past eight months has been taking modafinil as part of a trial. Now 27. he says: "It is nothing like amphetamine. You take them and that is that - there is no high. The fact that they are nonaddictive makes me feel easier."

Although be still bas to take sleepiness, which usually last 10 the occasional nap during the day be says he feels more active. middle of a meal or wheo suf- In the past he has been uoable ferers are walking in the street. to hold on to jobs but be hopes Although frequeotly treated as to start a university course in the a joke, it is a disabling condition autumn. "It used to take a lot which interrupts studies, makes—to get me out. It's bard to fight work impossible and destroys and hard to beat but I am starting to get there now," he said.

2,000 porn images seized from Net

By Glenda Cooper

Social Affairs Correspondent

child pornography were removed from the Internet over oumber is not known as police the last year after complaints to records do not differentiate the British industry watchdog, the Department of Trade and

In the first annual report means. from the industry-funded Internet Watch Foundation, the the amount it catches is just a body said it had received 781 complaints referring to 4,300 items on the Net in the 12 months since it established a complaints hotline.

cent) with small proportions about seven per cent each - covering matters such as financial scams, adult pornography, racism and malicious E-mails.

Only a small proportion of the items originated in the UK with the majority coming from the US (63 per cent), Japan (19

per cent) and Europe (11 per ceot).

Public complaints had re-MORE than 2,000 images of sulted in a number of prosecutions in Britain, but the exact between child pornography on the Internet and that which is Industry announced yesterday. produced through traditional

The IWF acknowledges that "very small proportion" of the total available on the Internet. The foundation is working on software which can find sites likely to contain illegal ma-The reports were mainly terial and IWF chairman David about child pornography (85 per Kerr said he hoped within 18 months they would have developed free software which would help parents regulate

what children had access to. The DTI minister Barbara Roche welcomed the work done by the IWF and announced a Government review aimed at widening its role.

DAILY POEM

Hands of the Country

By Mike Harding

As she sat in her chair staring in the fire I traced my four years finger along the roads Of her hands, the valleys between the knuckles, The hills of bone that rose

Over the slack satin-skinned plains. I travelled with my child's touch Along the byways of those old veined Hands, following, without knowing it

Lanes that would lead down all the days To the hand that holds the pen Mapped now with the tracks and ways Of my own far country.

"Hands of the Country" comes from Crystal Set Dreams, the second collection by the travel and children's writer Mike Harding, who is also well-known as a folk singer and comedian. Costal Set Dreams (£7.95) is published by Peterloo Poets, 2 Kelly Gardens, Calslock, Cornwall PL18 9SA.



AN innovative dance company bringing 10- to 14-year-olds on to the West End stage will have to cancel all productions next year because of lack of fuods.

The plight of London Children's Ballet, the result of one on a book by Paul Gallico. woman's dedication to young people's dance, highlights the no production. The LCB recrisis in the arts and the way that The Independent's campaign could help to alleviate it.

Artistic director Lucille Briance formed the company five years ago. A journalist, she had worked on Esquire and Vogue magazines and founded a movie up the London Children's Ballet hecause her 10-year-old background, the company does daughter had wanted to audition for The Royal Ballet tuition given over the five-School, but Mrs Briance said no, month rehearsal period. thinking there should be a cominterests and academic work.

The LCB auditions more 151 ballet schools, mainly after- send." school and Saturday morning classes. Their productions have oess sponsorship, but has a been sell-outs, and in May they make their debut on the West

Theatre in a new production of Mrs Harris Goes To Paris, based

But next year there will be ceives no public funding. Mrs Briance said: "The Arts Council's dance department told me 'no, you come under education,' the education people told me I was dance. Two applications for lottery funding have heen turned down. Yet, in order to Absolutely Pabulous star Joanmagazine in New York. She sel make this special experience na Lumley and Mark Elder, the open to children from every not charge for the 100 hours of

The many families who pany that allows children to cannot afford the £14,000-adance but also to pursue other year for the Royal Ballet School and prefer their children to have a more rounded childhood thao 400 children a year from have found the company a god-

The company gets some busishortfall of £31,000 and will not be able to mount a production End stage at the Peacock next year. I can see this cycle

never ending," said Mrs Briance. "I support The Independent campaign 100 per cent. I can't. tell you how many people have told me there isn't an incentive to give to the arts. And I know that an incentive such as tax relief for individual donations would help us enormously."

The independent and Independent On Sunday are campaigning for the Chancellor, Gordon Brown, to use his Budget on 17 March to make all donations to the arts tax deductible. This would create a climate of giving in the United Kingdom - giving more and more people incentives to help their favourite arts companies.

We have been inundated with support from readers and from celebrities in the arts. Latest supporters include the conductor and former music director of the English National Opera, who telephoned from Munich where he is conducting Tippett's A Midsummer Marriage, to give his support.



The last dance: Members of the London Children's Ballet rehearsing for their show, Mrs Harris Goes to Paris, which will be performed at the Peacock Theatre, in the West End of London, in May

Police to reinstate woman inspector

lodged a complaint of sex discrimination is to be reinstated.

charges against Dena Fleming are being dropped and her suspension is being lifted, Lincolnshire Police said yesterday. A friend of Inspector Flem-

ing, who has two children, said ficer again," the frieod said.

Nottingham last week delivaffair after a two-year hearing. It rejected Inspector Fleming's allegations of sex discrimination but ruled she had been victimised.

The force's chief constable, Peter Bensley, who was singled out for criticism by the tribunal, is due to retire at the end of May. Last Friday he was questioned by members of Lin-

colnshire Police Authority. It is thought the decision to reinstate Inspector Fleming was

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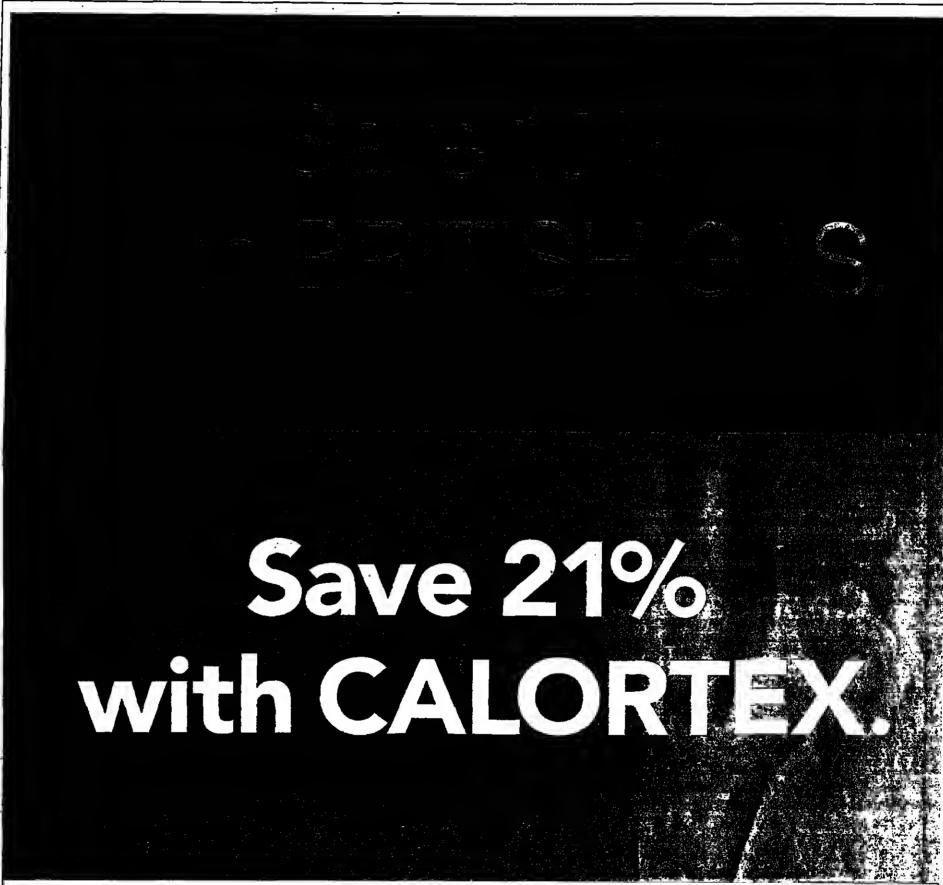
A WOMAN police inspector stable Phil Davies, who is in who was victimised after she charge of disciplinary matters.

The authority also considered an inquiry into the case by All outstanding disciplinary the chief constable of Humberside, Tony Leonard. His report, which is covered by public interest immunity (PII) and has not been made public, is thought also to criticise Mr Bensley.

Gillian Merron, Lincoln's she wanted to return to work. MP, has said she will ask the "She intends to be a police of- Home Secretary, Jack Straw, to place the report in the House An industrial tribunal io of Commons library - a way to circumvent the PIL Miss Merered a 96-page judgment on the ron said it was vital that grievance procedures were seen to be fair. She criticised the costs of the case - estimated at between £350,000 and £500,000.

> The tribunal was told inspector Fleming was suspended after planting a tape recorder to record the alleged discrimination at Gainsborough police station. She said the problems began after she was forced to implement changes to the predominantly male shift who resented her because she was a woman.

taken by Deputy Chief Coo-



INDEPENDENT

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Millennium threat to Britain's highways

By Anthony Bevins Political Editor

The threat of the Millennium computer bug hlacking out traffic lights and other traffic control systems has belatedly been recognised by the Highways Agency, it was revealed

David Clark, the Cabinet minister with responsibility for public service computer networks, last night published Whitehall's latest report un preparations for the Year 2000 (YZK) computer date-change when many computers are ex-surance of millennium complipected to crash because they are ance, the Highways Agency programmed to interpret the replied: "Unknown". It also year suffix "00" as 1900, rather than 2000.

of putting the problem right have increased from an estimated £370m to £393m over the last three months - but final costs could well be three have reached the testing stage. times as much as that when and in some cases, completed hospitals, schools, police and fire services are taken into account.

Computer Weekly reports tomarrow that internal government figures already show a work by March 1999". But demillennium bug budget in excess of the £750m planned for the Millennium Dome. Tony Blair, who has taken keep interest in the issue, is to make a speech on it at a Midland Bank conference later this month.

An illustration of the escaterday by the Highways Agency, which had previously budgeted for £4.3m. Yesterday, that shot up to £14.3m, with a completion deadline slipping from the end of this year to Spring 1998 - because of "new activities".

The new work included pro- progress.

jects for "Type approval of traffic control equipment" and Trunk road highway network infrastructure". Mr Clark summed that up as "management of traffic lights".

So far, the agency has spent just £130,000 ~ less than one per cent of its overall budget - and its answers to the standard questions put by the Cabinet Office illustrate the fraught nature of the exercise faced by government and husiness.

Asked what percentage of its computer system components for which it had adequate assaid replies it had received from suppliers, asked for as-According to Mr Clark's surances that they were dealing calculations, the overall costs with their Y2K problems, were

Mr Clark said in a Commons reply: "The progress reports indicate that many organisations work for significant systems."

He also said that all organisatinns now set themselves a completion date, "with 81 per cent expecting to complete partments have not been given central benchmarks for the work ahead - nor have they been given deadlines for testing their equipment.

The Department of Health even reported: "Programme completion date is end of latioo in costs was provided yes- March 2000, this to allow for re-

medial work after 1.1.2000." Mr Clark said he had no direct responsibility for hospitals, and that Frank Dobson, Secretary of State for Health, had written to them separately, asking to be kept informed of



Through the glass darkly: John Prescott, the Deputy Prime Minister, in his offices in London yesterday for the third meeting of the Central-Local Partnership, a forum set up to tackle social and economic decline and improve local services

Clarke warns of Tory fracture

By Anthony Bevins Political Editor

THE Conservative Party could "break up" or "fracture" over Europe if the leadership insisted on nutright apposition to the European single currency, Kenneth Clarke warned yesterday.

The farmer Chancellor of

Deputy Prime Minister - that he found it hard to explain how a pro-European government had become a Eurosceptic oppositinn following the party's "collective nervous breakdown" over the past three or four

ly expected, party unity could be seriously damaged.

"There is no sensible reason why arguments about the form of words we should use in 1998 to describe our future intentions un Britain's possible entry into EMU [economic and monetary

said. If Mr Hague forced the issue, he would be "running the risk of fracturing the party", and the party could "break up" over that form of words.

As for Mr Hague's plans to

losers will not forge unity.

put such the issue to a vote of a very short time. By the time party members, Mr Clarke said: of the general election, we

itive Europe Group - chaired ership hardened its opposition tive unity on the subject of tyon EMU when the party can by Michael Heseltine, former to the single currency, as wide- Britain in Europe," Mr Clarke happily hold together those who agree with various propositions, Creating winners and

> "A ballot could be highly divisive and any formula agreed might seem quite out of date in

North Sea trawlers face crackdown on black economy

He effectively warned union should now shatter 50 "There is no point in having a could have boxed ourselves the Exchequer told a packed Communs meeting of the Pos-William Hague that if the lead- years of reasonable Conservaballot of all members of the par- into an unsustainable position.

By Nicholas Schoon **Environment Correspondent**

THE Government moved yesterday to crack down on "black fish" - the vast tonnages of cod. haddock and other species caught over and above quotas large trawlers can only land their during certain times of day.

would be breaching the conditions of its fishing licence, and which are jeopardising North be liable for prosecution and a ery of European Unioo at- the EU North Sea quotas.

hring in a new system where rules are intended to end the fishing of the North Sea. The Government is consulting on catch at named fishing ports into small ports, to offload their year to year along with stocks over-quota fish on to refriger-Any boat not complying ated lorries without any auction or declaration of the catch.

The practice makes a mock-

Sea stocks. Ministers intend to fine of up to £50,000. The new tempts to stop the chronic overpractice of trawlers slipping quantities involved vary from and market prices, but it has been estimated that for some species illegal catches are half as large as those allowed under

Pentium

The new rules which the cover vessels over 20 metres long, a minority of the UK fishing fleet, but responsible for more than half the total fish landed. They will have to land their fish at 32 ports, mostly in as the beef sector, and ap-Scotland, during certain hours. peared to rule out further aid.

MPs call for BSE **funding** review

By Colin Brown Chief Political Correspondent

A LABOUR-DOMINATED committee of MPs last night reinforced the message from the countryside march in London by warning the Government against "harsh" treatment for beef farmers and criticised Jack Cunningham, the Agriculture Minister, for failing to produce a long-term plan for the beef industry in the wake of the BSE

Calling for a review of Government spending on BSE, the committee said denying more aid to farmers could have "unintended harsh consequences for specialist beef producers. whose heavier finished animals are often not eligible for full compensation."

The committee said: "We think that farmers are right to expect the Government to treat them sympathetically."

The committee is chaired by Tory MP Peter Luff, but seven of its 11 MPs are Labour MPs and its findings cannot he brushed aside by the Agriculture

The MPs say that BSE could lead to a restructuring of the beef industry in Britain, with many farmers going out of business, but it says the piecemeal approach of Tony Blair's Goverament and previous ministers has failed to meet the challenge to the farming industry.

-Valuable time and money that could have been spent un restructuring the industry has been wasted for lack of a clear Government long-term strategy which would have assisted farmers to recognise the need for change," the committee

The cummittee was also worried that Dr Cunningham may be gradually withdrawing subsidy altogether. In evidence, the Agriculture Minister said he could think of no other product in the UK which received the same level of financial support

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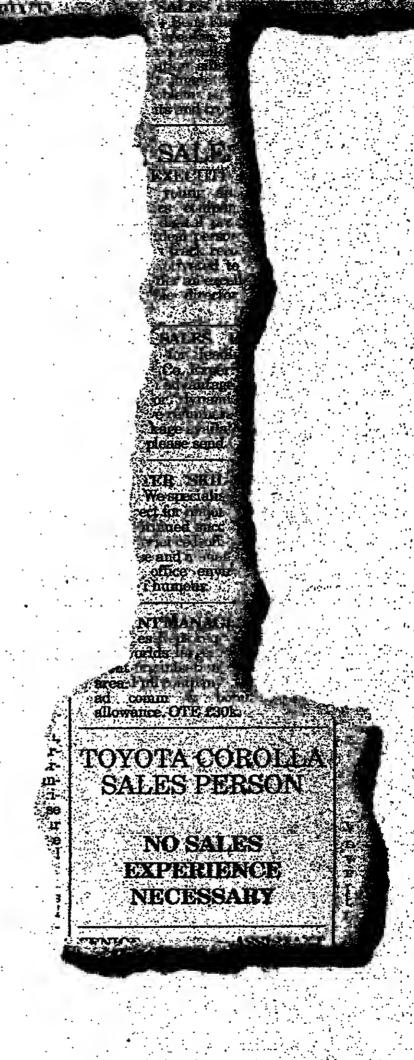
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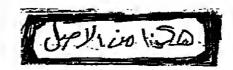


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Rivals woo President to become India's PM

WITH most results from India's general election declared, the nation is once again confronted by monumental uncertainty, from which only criminals and opportunists will profit.

The Hindu nationalist BIP has improved its standing dramatically since the last election. taking, along with its allies, 37 per cent of the vote nationwide and more than 250 seats. But this is still 20 seats short of an overall majority.

Meanwhile, Congress has also improved on its former position, and with its allies holds around 166 seats.

The two groupings will each now work furiously to persuade President K R Nara yanan - whose role is very similar to, and derived from, that of the Crown in the British system - that they deserve to form the next government.

The BJP will do this by recruiting as many of the 20-plus independent MPs as it can. The Congress is already oegotiating with the third force, the United Front, about forming a coalition government.

But the decision is the President's alone. He is more than likely to take a punt on the BJP and its venerable candidate for-

prime minister, Atal Vajpayee. He will be predisposed in their favour because the BIP is the largest single party, and although it has entered into some unlikely alliances for a natiooalist party - with secessionist Sikhs, old-fashioned Socialists and the former film star. Jayalalitha, who has been in prison facing massive corruption charges - these connections were cemented before the elec-

Congress and the UF will have a tougher job impressing him, conversely, because they have made such a hash of things over the past 18 months.

In that arrangement the UF ran the government while Congress propped it up from outside, rather like a flying

The upshot was two brief, frail premierships, both brought down by Congress.

This time Congress wants to run the government as the dominant partner in a conventional coalition.

Whatever Mr Narayanan's decision, India is in for another debilitating bout of horsetrading from which, as the recent farcical realignments in the Uttar Pradesh state legislature demonstrated, the main beneficiaries will be those politicians rootless and slippery enough to slither from one party to another at short notice.

The victim again will be the Indian nation and people, hurdened with another spatchcock

The fortunes of the main parties have varied wildly from state to state. In Uttar Pradesh Congress was exterminated, even at Amethi, long known as the "pocket borough" of the Gandhi-Nehru family.

But in Maharashtra, the bridges built by Congress leader Sharad Pawar to Dalits ("Untouchables") and Muslims dealt the BJP's sinister regional ally Shiv Sena a crippling blow.

Also in Uttar Pradesh, Indian romantics will be sorry to learn, the "Bandit Queen" Phoolan Devi has lost her seat



after a recklessly indolent first. Making moves: Sharad Pawar, of the Congress Party, is widely being projected as the front runner to be India's next prime minister

S. Korea's hopes for unity dashed

By Richard Lloyd Parry

KIM DAE JUNG knows better than anyone that Korean politics is an unforgiving business but, for a few hours at least, he had his hopes.

A week ago, before the 45,000 strong crowd which flocked to the National Assembly for his inauguration as South Korean president, he made an appeal to his parliamentary opponents. "We will never be able to overcome today's crisis without co-operation from you," he said. "[You] must help me if only for one year - this year when the nation is standing on the brink of disaster."

If the new president saw any real prospect of cross-party co-operation, he has been rudely disappointed in the last week.

A few hours after his speech, the oppositioo Grand National Party (GNP) reected his choice of Prime Minister by poycotting the vote; on Monday opposing MPs were seen on national television shoving one another in the Assembly over

With a bit of constitutional legerdemain, President Kim yesterday managed to for... a cabinet, but his choice of prime minister has still not been fully endorsed, and he faces continuing political argy-bargy.

Mr Kim's troubles emphasise that his moral authority - as a lifelong democrat and former political prisoner - is far stronger than his political mandate.

Central to his troubles, and symptomatic of his weak position, is Kim Jong Pil, another veteran politician and the president's nominee for the premiership.

Yesterday, President Kim named a cabinet, but the best he could do for Kim Jong Pil was to name him as "acting prime minister", a decision which was immediately challenged by the opposition.

Without the support of Kim JP, Kim DJ (as they are respectively known) could nev-

er have won the presidency. Even with the support of his partner's United Liberal Democrats (ULD), his majority was barely one per cent and, throughout the campaign, he made it clear that JP would be his prime minister.

This is despite the fact that, throughout their lives, the two have been on diametrically opposed political sides. Kim Jong Pil is best known for founding the notorious Korean CIA which arrested, tortured and attempted to kill the new president on several occasions.

The GNP, whose own presidential candidate was defeated by the alliance of the two Kims but which retains its parliamentary majority, has been milking this inconsistency for all it is worth.

As a one-time prime minister and as sociate of former military dictators, and lacking economic expertise. JP is an anpropriate premier for a modern Korea, they

All this might be convincing if it were not for the fact that the GNP itself, several years and changes of names ago, was itself the party of these same generals.

Some within the GNP acknowledge this, indeed their reluctance to allow a straightforward vote appears to stem from a fear that it will expose divisions and encourage

No quick fix, Suharto told

By Richard Lloyd Parry

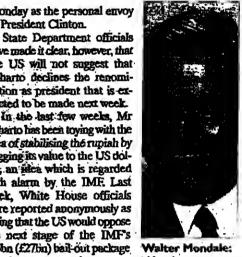
THE FORMER US vice-president, Walter Mondale, warned President Scharto yesterday that: there are no "quick fixes" for the economic crisis ravaging indonesia, and that the country's only hope is to push through the reforms which it has agreed with

the International Mediciny Fund "I came ... with the basic pur pose of seeing to it that the United States, and others working with Indonesia, see [through] the implementation of these IMF ghidelines, the restoration of .. confidence and the stability that's crucial to this country," said Mr Mondale who arrived on

Monday as the personal envoy of President Clinton.

have made it clear, however, that the US will not suggest that Suharto declines the renomination as president that is expected to be made next week. In the last few weeks, Mr Subarto has been toying with the idea of stabilising the rupiah by pegging its value to the US dollar, an idea which is regarded with alarm by the IMF. Last week, White House officials were reported anonymously as saying that the US would oppose the next stage of the IMF's \$43bn (£27bn) bail-out package

if such a step was takeo.



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Actress's finale silences mobile phone menace

THE National Theatre actress Maureen Beattle, who is playing the role of lago's wife in a production of Othello in Hong Kong, has emerged as a heroine in the struggle against excessive use of mobile phones, writes Stephen, Vines.

phone calls during a National Theatre performance at the Hong Kong Arts Festival, Miss Beattic took it upon berself to berate the andience after a final curtain call. "Everyone

Following a particularly cheered, I could not get them film they regard as rather slow grievous oothreak of mobile to stop," she said.

Few artistic performances in Hong Kong get away without the menace of mobile phone interruption. Cinema-goers not only receive calls, they also make them during parts of the

The theatre where Othello was playing is now considering requiring patrons to check in their mobile phones in the same way that cameras and tape recorders are taken in.

🗈 feedii

INDEPENDENT INDEPENDENT



Education

Lifelong Learning The Role for Universities

Thursday 5 March 1998 · Central London

roment is due to publish a series of White Papers on Lifelong Learning in early 1998, from the DRE Scottish and Welsh Offices. This one day CVOP conference will explore the role for universities in developing and ng the Government's proposals. Universities already play a significant role in lifelong learning, providing courses at all levels - HND,

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Flicker of hope for Britons held in Chechnya

in Moscow

THERE was a flicker of hope last night, albeit frustratingly slender, for two British hostages who have been held in Chechnya for more than seven months.

Quoting an unnamed source in the capital, Grozny, Russia's Interfax news agency said that Jon James, 37, and Camilla Carr, 40, may be freed before a four-day trip to London by the Chechen president, Aslan Maskhadov, which begins next

military commander, bad pledged to "mobilise the whole might" of his enforcement agencies to secure their release, it said. Among those efforts is an appeal broadcast on Chechen television from the British ambassador to Moscow, Sir Andrew Wood

The couple were abducted by six masked gunmen last July after arriving in Grozny to help children traumatised by the republic's 21-month war with Moscow. For months, the Foreign Office discouraged publicity for their plight, arguing that this

The grizzled Chechen leader, a former could drive up any ransom demand. But they requested warm clothes. The experiits stance softened as their incarceration

> Pressure for openness was stepped up when former Beirut hostages Terry Waite and John McCarthy rallied to their families' assistance. Last month the two men attended a well publicised 40th birthday party for Ms Carr in London.

> Information about the couple's condition has been scarce, although two weeks ago the Chechen prime minister; Shamil Basavev, said that British diplomats have been given a video of the couple in which

ence of other hostages seized in Chechnya which has seen an epidemic of abductions in the last 18 months - suggests that the conditions are harsh. The British embassy in Moscow has refused to comment on the existence of a video, admitting only to receiving "different indications that the

hostages are alive". Yesterday's Interfax report implied that the couple may be freed as the Chechen authorities want to remove "all irritants" in the relations with London a view that is based on the optimistic as- long, and so far fruitless; efforts to reform

sumption that Mr Maskhadov has sufficient clout to secure their release. Despite his attempts at a crack down, kidnappings have continued apace, often in search of six-figure ransoms.

One issue is certain, though. Mr Maskhadov will visit London in an unofficial capacity as Britain does not recognise Chechnya's independence and is only willing to treat him as the leader of a Russian republic. But he will face a barrage of questions about the couple's safety.

Boris Yeltsin tried a new move in his

Russia's chaotic military yesterday by appointing a new head of his policy-making Security Council, and shaking up his de-

fence agencies. Andrei Kokoshin, 52, a former chief of the Defence Council, was appointed to replace Ivan Rybkin, a key intermediary in negotiations with the Chechens, who has been placed in charge of relations with the Commonwealth of Independent States after a government reshuffle.

 Mr Yeltsin has also scrapped his once powerful Defence Council in the hope of coordinating military reform and policy.

Cook to join fray in Serbia

WESTERN governments yesterday piled pressure on Slobodan Milosevic, the Yugoslav President, to help find a way out of the ever-growing hostilities between Serb police and the Albanian majority in the southern Serbian province of Kosovo.

The Foreign Office said that Robin Cook, the Foreign Sccretary, was planning to travel to Beigrade, and possibly the Kosovan capital Pristina, on behalf of the European Union on his way back from today's visit to Bosnia. Last night diplomats were arranging meetings with Mr Milosevic and with Albanian leaders from Kosovo.

As Kosovo's Albanian community buried more than 20 people killed by Serbian police in "anti-terrorist" raids on private houses over the weekend - the worst incident since the province lost its autonomy from Belgrade nine years ago - Mr Milosevic was singled out by European and US officials as the man who needs to give way if a solution is to be found to one of the Balkans' most intractable ethnic conflicts.

"President Miloscvic knows very well that the United States will not tolerate violence and that violence will lead to the toughest consequences imaginable. It would spell the end of his government, beyond the shadow of a doubt," warned Richard Gelbard, the US special envoy to the Balkans, who just a week ago visited Kosovo in an attempt to start dialogue hetween the opposing parties.

The European Commissioner for Foreign Affairs, Hans van den Broek, expressed similar sentiments. "The clock is ticking and it is almost 12 o'clock," he said. "We feel very clearly that President Milosevic bears very great responsibility in this respect."

The tough words from international officials reflected their concern that Kosovo could spiral capially out of control. Although the Albanian leadership favours non-violent protest and negotiation with Belgrade to re-establish autonomy within Yugoslavia, the situation has been pushed to crisis point by the emergence of an armed guerrilla group, the Kosovo Liberation Army, that intends to fight for outright independence.



Bare facts: Two women viewing Henri Matisse's Nude With White Dropery at the Hermitage Museum in St Petersburg. The piece is part of a collection on loan to the Hermitage from Copenhagen and is being shown in its entirety outside Denmark for the first time Photograph: Alexander Demianchuk/Reuters

German army hit by leap in neo-Nazi incidents

By Imre Karacs in Bonn

THE number of neo-Nazi inci- and 13 NCOs. "It is my impresdents discovered in the German uadrupica lasi vear. Inc Bundeswehr's ombudswoman reported yesterday. Compared to 44 cases in 1996, there had been 177 manifestations of right-wing extremism in 1997, causing "unquestionable harm".

In her annual survey, Clair Marienfield said 229 soldiers

were investigated for neo-Nazi activities, including two lieutenants sion that superiors and fellow soldiers reacted with sensitivity to such incidents, and took the appropriate steps," she wrote. Many cases involved nothing more sinister than soldiers listening to neo-Nazi CDs, unaware of the lyrics.

Ms Marienfield was scathing. however, about the Bundeswehr's "lack of distance" towards the tra-

shocked to discover, during her tered, complaining of "stunning visits to barracks, Nazi regalia on 'ignorance" among some young reopen display as part of historical explanation of their significance. Maps of the Third Reich and other period relics were shown alongside items from today's armed forces, suggesting some kind of

continuity. The ombudswoman was also unimpressed with the level of po-

cruits. The rise of right-wing exficers were failing to grasp the opportunity to dispel some of the dangerous misconceptions that conscripts carry in their heads.

The military should improve courses in civic studies, she suggested in her report to Parliament.

Her report follows in the wake of a series of controversies engulfing the Bundeswehr. A special parliamentary commission is. in society. But she added that of- of wide-spread neo-Nazi activities in the army. The sudden surge of recorded incidents may be due to growing awareness of the problem. But there is enough evidence to suggest that, after a period of decline, extreme right-wing tendencies are again on the rise.

20 arrested in Nigerian protest

LAGOS (Reulers) - Nigerian police arrested 20 protesters against the military ruler, General Sani Abacha, in Lagos, Witnesses said those arrested included Olisa Agbakoba, leader of United Action for Democracy (UAD), who had called a march to counteract a huge rally in the capital Abuja to press General Abacha to transform himself into n civilian president. Police earlier used tear-gas to disperse the few dozen marchers waving placards who defied an official ban on the protest.

Heir apparent

BRUSSELS (Reuters) - Grand Duke Jean of Luxembourg named his son Prince Henri as governor, the first formal step towards passing him the country's crown, "After mature reflection I think the moment has arrived to take a new step in the preparation of the future reign of our son Henri," the Grand Duke said in a letter to Prime Minister Jean-Claude Juncker published by the Luxembourg government.

Strike hits Harare

HARARE (AP) - Zimbabwe's capital, with riot police posted on its outskirts, was eerily quiet as a nationwide strike took hold to protest government economic policies. The government previously warned it would send soldiers into the streets to quell any unrest during the two-day strike, which it asserted was being held illegally.

Mir setback

MOSCOW (Reuters) - Cosmonauts broke three wrenches trying to open a hatch on the Russian Mir space station and had to abandon a spacewalk, Mission Control said. The failure, the latest in a series of problems on the 12-year-old Mir, left cosmonauts without an exit hatch to leave the station for spacewalks for at least several weeks. But they can still leave Mir in an emergency on the Soyuz escape capsule.

Dog's bad name

DAR ES SALAAM (Reuters) - A dog named "Immigration" which was sentenced to death by a Tanzanian court for having an offensive name has been executed, local newspapers reported.

When feeding frenzy comes, the piranhas dart in every direction

DMITTEDLY, international dramas or events - a Gulf war, the collapse of a Berlin Wall, little upsets like that - cause greater hordes of journalists to congregate. Other cities have large numbers of correspondents permanently accredited to report on government policy.

Name the less, Brussels remains unique. Hundreds of journalists swirl around to report on every twist and turn of European Union policy. At moon every day comes the feeding frenzy, where the latest decisions are announced in several languages. But, in stark contrast to elsewhere, each of the piranhas is interested in different is-



sues, in the White House press room, the dominant tone is national CNN, Washington Post. Neusweek and Time are the guys that count. On Euro-storics, however, there are no national media. A decision about unfair steel subsidies may be remote for one country hut front-page news elsewhere.

Only in one crucial respect is Britain different from all the other countries reporting on EU affairs. In Germany, Italy, Poland or South Korea, Europe is covered for its own sake; EU decisions are the subject of debate. But Britain continues to believe that Brussels is simultaneously much too important and almost irrelevant. Politicians still present reality through the prism of Westminster.

In recent months, British politicians like Gordon Brown have still seemed convinced that they can spin to their hearts' content about British triumphs, leaving the Wacky Foreigners out of the loop. It is a fascinatingly futile view. Brussels is not just a bunch of foreigners; Brussels has become part of our lives.

n reality, there are two Brussels. There is Brussels (Europe) - at the heart of which stands the huge Berlaymont huilding, the former commission headquarters which is now covered in white sheeting like a creation by wran-artist Christo, because of the dangers of asbestos. Mcanwhile, gleaming new asbestos-free Euro-buildings pop up all around - a newly opened

parliament building here, an about-to-be-opened commission huilding there.

And then there is Brussels (Belgium). Town-and-gown conflicts are nothing, by comparison with Brussels' comission-and-country division. Euro-people indulge in Belgian chocolate, Belgian monks' beer, and Belgian surrealism (the much-heralded new Magritte exhibition, not the political process or the local highway code). Beyond that, the crossovers are few. A European official was asked how many Belgians she knew. Not very many. Five or six," came the somewhat sheepish reply. "That many?" replied her Belgian interlocutor, with no ap- If the EU gets into serious difparent irony. Integration may ficulties, Mr Diawa is clearly be a European dream, In Brussels, it has a long way to go.

russels is more than just a city of grey suits, that is for sure. A note from a Bruxellois, Mr Diawa, dropped through the letterbox last week, promising "important revelations about your life". Mr Diawa described himself as "chief of the grand sacred forest of Africa". He offers "effective protection in work and love, for slimming or getting fatter, for business". Above all, "If bad luck pursues you, I will help you with my great power - even for desperate cases."

their man - especially since it won't be too expensive. He promises: "Success from the first visit.".

ome Euro-successes have already begun. Restaurants have started marking their prices in euros, demonstrating Euro-patriotism and a belief in the new era. Even now, British politicians remain wary of the single currency. It is worth noting, however, that that the "pragmatists" (sceptics) have had to give much more ground than the enthusiasts in recent

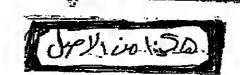
Perhaps, therefore, Brussels deserves a new hero. Belgium's best-known popular character (apart from the urinating fountain-figure Manneken Pis, who can even be eaten in dark chocolate) is the boy with the famous quiff and the little white dog. Distinguishing features: ineffable optimism in absurd circumstances, and he always succeeds in the end. Mayhe Herge's Tintin and Snowy should become the EU's very own mascots. Good for the dreamers' morale - and good for reconciliation between the decent hul dull Euro-Brussels, on the one hand, and the unvarnished but real Belgo-Brussels next door.



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Hang on, there's a noose vacancy

By Mary Braid

THE 15 convicted killers and armed robbers languishing on Swaziland's Death Row could be forgiven for getting a touch complacent about their appeals. It is 15 years since the country last carried out an ex-But there is bad news, boys.

Chief Maweni Simelane, the chief justice minister, has advertised in the local press for a "brave young man who has what it takes" to become the country's new hangman.

The official line is that if a country has a death sentence then, theoretically, it must have someone prepared to hang 'em high. But the development is a little ominous since Swaziland has managed perfectly well without an executioner since the mid 1980s when the then hangman - a South African apparently threw in the towel. bured beyond endurance sentence again.

by several nooseless years. What has prompted the justice minister's quest for a hangman is unclear. He may be firing a warning shot over the heads of perpetrators or perhaps spearheading a right-wing campaign to persuade King Snbhuza II to get tougher on criminals. Since he came to power in 1986 at the age of 18 the king, who has final say on whether an executinn can be carried out, has never sanc-

Chief Simelane claims that the issue has been forced because of a sudden increase in the number of death sentences being handed down by courts.

We've never actually officially dropped the practice [hanging] but no criminals were sentenced to death by nut courts since the bangman ran off." Chief Simelane said. "It is just recently that the court have started imposing the death



Consultative Conference, held in advance of a meeting of parliament in Beijing

Microsoft boss denies global monopoly

By Mary Dejevsky m Washington

A COOLLY insistent Bill Gates, chairman of the Microsoft Corporation and the richest man in America, denied yesterday that his company bad, or sought, a mnnopoly of the computer software market or that it aspired to dominate the global information network, the Internet.

Mr Gates, trying hard to live down his reputation in Washington for arrogant disregard of the political establishment, was testifying before the Senate Judiciary Committee at a special bearing held to consider the state of the computer industry.

"Microsoft does not have monopoly power in the business of developing and licensing computer operating systems," he told the committee, describing it as "preposterous" to think that any one company could control access to the Internet.

In an interview with the Washington Post, timed to coincide with the hearing, Mr Gates maintained that his company's ability to innovate could be endangered if its business was restricted. And "if we cannot innovate, then you know we will be replaced" as industry leader.

Yesterday's hearing, much of which was televised, had beeo keenly awaited as an opportunity for the political and legal arguments currectly swirling around Microsoft to be aired in public. At issue is whether Microsoft's market dominance is a just reward for its innovativeness (as it claims) or an impediment to free competitioo that should be curbed (as its rivals claim). The might of the US computer industry - chief executives of Dell, Netscape, Sun Microsystems and others turned up in person to testify.

While the Republican chairman of the Senate panel, Orrin Hatch, denied that the Microsoft, proceediogs devel- and Internet providers.

oped rapidly into an inquisition into Microsoft's market dominance. Its software is installed in 85 per cent of personal contputers world-wide and accounts for 95 per cent of the software installed in PCs now sold.

In a graphic illustration of the state of the market, Jim Barksdale, president of Netscape Communications. one of Microsoft's main rivals, asked yesterday's audience how many used PCs (almost all); and then how many did not use Microsoft's Windows software (almost none). That, said Mr



Bill Gates: Internet control is 'preposterous' notion

Barksdale, was a monopoly. and he called for rigorous enforcement of US competition (anti-trust) legislation to deal with it.

Otherwise, he said: "Microsoft's abuse of its monopoly power ... will adversely affect the course of American commerce and communications in the information age."

Io a lawsuit hrought by the US Justice Department, Microsoft is accused of trying to consolidate its hold oo the market for "browsers" - the software that cootrols access to the Internet. It is also accused of breaching a 1995 undertaking on competitiveness by imposing restrictive deals on its hearing was intended to vilify customers: computer-makers

French whine at US takeover

By John Lichfield in Paris

ONE of the biggest Californian wine producers has set up a company to produce American wine in France, or at least French wine with an American

The project will please some wine producers in the Langue- American production methods doc region, who can expect to to French raw materials. The sell up to 10 million bottles a plan is to create a range of year on the US market under French red wines - from £5 to the label of Robert Mondavi, the third largest producer in the American tastes".

American palate - will alarm many wine purists. There is alwines, including expensive labels, are being debased to appeal to unsubtle foreign tastes. Traditionally, French wine is

supposed to draw its character from the subtleties of local topography and local production techniques - the very nature of "le terroir" (the soil).

French experts say that there is an increasing temptation among French producers to abandon this tradition and go for the evenness of quality and strength of taste of a typical American, or Chilean or Aus- to buy its own vineyards.

tralian wine. This depends on more intensive metbods of wine-manufacture and boosts the importance of the type of grape used over the importance of the "terroir".

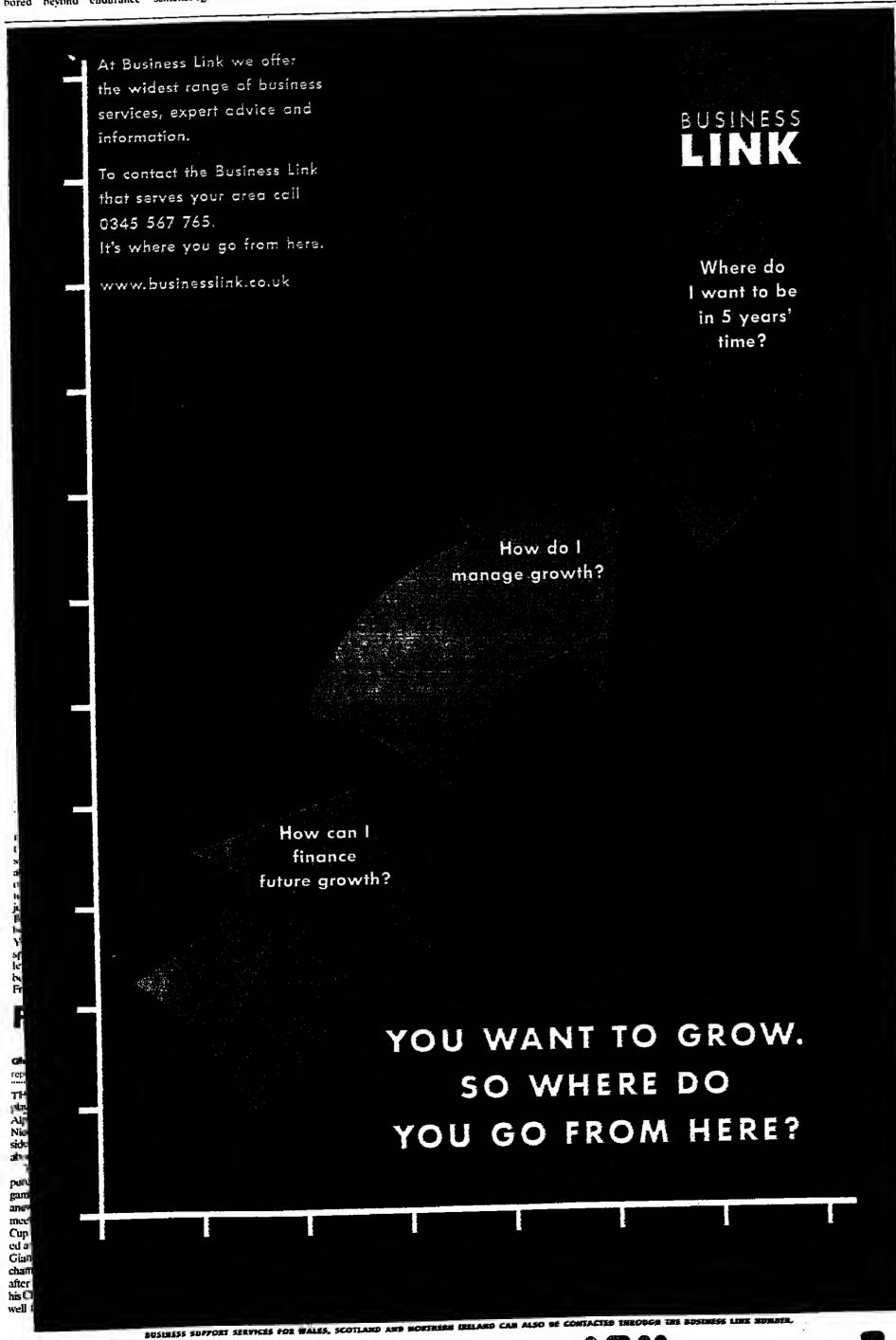
This appears to be precisely what Robert Mondavi intends to do with its new "Vichon Meditteranean" label: to apply £25 a bottle - "adapted to

Californian Napa Valley. Whether or nnt American But the aim of Mondavi-to tastes are inferinr tn French create a new variety of French tastes is a matter for endless arwine which appeals to the gument French experts say a typical American wine is "virile" rather than "subtle". As one ready concern that some French defender of French wine heritage puts it, American wine "hits you in the palate like a thick layer of wine jam".

Robert Mnndavi's venture is being driven partly by a sbortage of American wine, following an outhreak of the phylloxera disease in vineyards in California. It is also intended to take advantage of a renewed fad for French red wine in the US.

Initially, Mondavi will purchase grapes from local French · producers. Eventually it hopes





Slow death of the war children

Are the air raids of the Gulf war still claiming victims? Robert Fisk reports from the cancer ward of a Basra hospital



also be a spiritually broken man. He Ali Haidar in the Saddam Hussein City Hospital in Baghdad. Never did US strategists suggest that Gulf war bombings would lead to cancer

ically small with thinning hair and a to his brala and his lungs. He will fering shortness of breath." Zubei- treatment, which makes his prognosis with an easy-to-expose lie, a crude old, who were waiting outside Dr drooping moustache. But there is probably live one year - not more."

nothing funny about his commentary. The doctor led me across the *Because of the tumour in his ear, room to where Zubeida Mohamed Matar Ahbas is now unable to talk Ali lay, chadored, on her bed. She or take food and is deaf," he said comes from Zubayr - close to the matter-of-factly. "He came for his . Iraqi air base that was saturated with first treatment only oo Jaouary 16th, allied bombs in a series of raids that with a swelling and an inability to talk started on the night of 13 February, and bombs at his home," Dr al-Ali of what these cancer victims were sayor drink. The hiopsy showed cancer. 1998. "She has tumours of the lymph I am giving him cytotoxic chemother nodes and they have infiltrated her apy but later on, the cancer will go chest." Dr al-Ali said. "She is suf- He is losing weight despite our tempt to set up a visiting journalist

Opposite lay 55-year old Jawad Hassan, diagnosed with cancer of the looked at mc with a blank expression. stomach two years ago. He lived almost next to the Basra television sta-fumes of the bombings, I comtion that was the target of Allied bomhing. "He was exposed to fumes continued. "He was also close to ing was so terrible that I almost the river hridges that were bombed. wished my visit had been a feeble at-

very bad."

"Ever since I was exposed to the plaioed about pains io my ahdomen," he said. The implications

attempt by Saddam's regime to raise The man, prematurely aged, a grave moral question over the entire Gulf war.

were visiting him until the moment we walked into his office. His patients did not expect visitors. And if some of them were - like so many cancer victims elsewhere in the world - el- moon-like face. derly, what was to be made of the flock of men and women; young and

1-Ali's oncology department? "It's a tragedy for me," Dr al-Ali said, pointing to a tall, handsome But Dral-Ali had no idea that we youth standing amid a group of women. "I'm losing friends every day - this boy has Hodgkin's lymphoma. This girl is suffering lung cancer." She was small, petite, with a big, smiling,

> Another, Fawzia Abdul-Nabi al-Bader, was a 51-year-old English

teacher who walked into the department office and pulled her collar down to show a suture on her neck and then opened her blouse to show the scar where her right breast should have been. "Why should this have happened to me?" she asked. "My first operation was in 1993. Un-

til that, my health was very good." In his office, Dr al-Ali's maps tell their own story. "Number of cancer patients of all kinds in the Basra area." it says over a map of the Basra govemorate, sliced up into yellow, red and green segments. The yellow, mainly to the west of the city, represents the rural and desert areas from which few cancer patients come. A green area to the north indicates an average incidence of cancer. But a large bloodred rectangle in the centre stands for the almost 400 cancer patients whom Dr al-Alī had to treat last year alone. It is his thesis that the battlefields in the yellow area to the west contaminated the water, the fields, even the fish with depleted uranium and nitrite. contaminating the land not only for survivors of the war but for those still to be born.

Back in the last days of the conflict, United States strategists were debating whether the damage to Iraq's infrastructure - the bombing of water pipes, power plants and oil refineries - would take the lives of Iraqis in the months or years to come. But never did they suggest that a policy of bomb-now, kill-later would ever involve cancer.

In Baghdad, hundreds of children most of there from the south - have died of leukaemia and stomach cancer since the war. Many were sent there by Dr al-Ali. "Everyone of us is in despair." he said in his Basra cancer ward. "It is a great burden on me - 1 am losing many of these patieots every day. They oeed bonemarrow transplants but we cannot give them to them. I cannot sleep at night for thinking about them."

Dusty farm ditches and disused trenches the tomato plantations are still killing fields

By Robert Fisk in Rafidiyah, southern fraq

Dr al-Ali smiles a lot, although from time to time - you notice tears

in his eyes and realise that he might

looks a little like Peter Sellers, phys-

out of Kuwait.

right ear.

AT FIRST glance, the Adwan family's tomato plantation doesn't look like a killing field. The polythene covers reflect the high, bright winter sun. And when I ask 16-year-old Imad Adwan what happened here during the Gulf war, he glances at the man from the Ministry of Information beside me and says he cannot remember. It pays, you see, to have a short memory in Iraq - and to lie.

As water trickles through the ditches between the rows of pale green bushes, a sharp wind blows out of the desert to the west, just as it did in February 1991, when Major General Tom Rhame's US First Infantry Division - the "Big Red One" - swept up the highway to Safwan, shelling the retreating columns of the Iraqi Republican Guard. Imad Adwan is watching me to see If I have understood his amnesia.

Don't worry, the ministry man telts him, and produces an identity card. The boy grins. "The battles were all around us here - we didn't even stay in the house because we knew it would not give us cover. But we



and another plantation, the rusting victims of General Rhame's attack moulder in the damp earth. Imad's mother has appeared beside us, a scarf around her head, a black dress tugged by the breeze.

She is holding a pale green tomato in her hand, "Please," she says, "It is for you." The tomato is small, plucked from the bush in tront of us, a poisoned fruit - according didn't leave. The wrecked tanks are over 10 the Basra doctors down the road - from there." Far beyond the barbed wire sur- a poisonous war, grown on a dangerous rounding the farm, beyond a stand of trees stem, bathed in fetid water. "The soldiers young - she was just 21 years old."

died on this road," she says, pointing to the highway behind us which leads south-west towards Safwan and the Kuwaiti frontier. "The battles went on for hours, People still get killed - two boys were blown up by mines over there last July." The outline of a collapsed trench shows the futal spot.

But it is other deaths that we have come about. Are the Adwans worried about their land? Do they know what the doctors say about it? That it could have been "infected" with radiation, contaminated by the depleted uranium and-tank shells which Imad refused to remember when we arrived? She has heard of cancer cases in the farmlands but none in her family, thanks be to God.

It is then that Hassan Salman walks up to us. He grows tomatoes and onions on the other side of the road. He has a distinguished face, brown from the sun, and is wearing a gold-fringed robe. When we mention cancer, he frowns. "Yes, we have had many cancer cases here," he says. "I think it happened because of the fires and what happened during the battles. The tanks were just down the road." He pauses. "My daughter-in-law died of cancer around 50 days ago. She was ill in the stomach. Her name was Amal Hassan Saleh. She was very

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US sees 'green light' for use of force

UNITED NATIONS (AP) -A UN warning to Iraq of "severest consequences" if it hreaks a deal to open presidential palaces gives Washington a "green light" to attack if Baghdad fails to honour the accord, the US amhassador said.

But most of the 15 members of the Security Council, which issued the warning on Monday. disagree with the US interpretation. Envoys from many countries, including long-time US allies, said that only the councit has the authority to determine whether Iraq has breached the deal and if so what response would be appropriate.

That was the main obstacle to quick approval of a council resolution endorsing Secretary-General Kofi Annan's agreement with the Iraqis to open all sites, including eight presidential palaces, to UN arms in-

Annan said if his deal holds, into full compliance."



All set: US Ambassador **Bill Richardson**

"we will be moving on to a period when Iraq will complete its ubligations and the council can begin thinking of lifting the sanctions" that were imposed after Iraq invaded Kuwait in

In Washington, US President Bill Clinton hailed the agreement and called on Iraq "to turn the commitment it has made

Ambassador Bill Richardson told NBC-TV's "Today" show: "This gives us the green light to approach our policy of diplomacy and force and it shows to the world once again that the onus of complying with this agreement is with Iraq."

Except for Britain, few other council members share that interpretation. During Monday's vote, speakers from China, Russia, France, Costa Rica, Brazil, Portugal, Sweden and others said the decision on using force rests with the full council alone.

Diplomatic sources said several countries agreed to support the resolution only after receiving oral assurances from the co-sponsors - Britain and Japan that the document did not constitute a "green light" for an automatic American attack.

Before the vote, China's UN ambassador, Qin Huasun, said of the agreement", al-Sahhaf Beijing had insisted "that there told Associated Press Television.

must not be any automatic authorization of the use of force against in Iraq in this current resolution."

"Our misgivings about the possible abuse of this resolution have not been removed," Oin said. "The passing of this resolution in no way means that the Security Council automatically authorizes any state to use force against Iraq."

It appeared that the lraqis were keenly aware of the divisions within the Security Coun-

In Baghdad, Foreign Minister Mohammed Saced al-Sahhaf said the resolution was a mere "face-saving" measure for the United States but promised that Baghdad would not violate the agreement.

"If there is any real meaning in this resolution, then it is the adoption and the endorsement

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She is an actress with a chameleon-like ability to swap accents, he is a writer whose work is anchored in his native Belfast. Together, they are on stage at the Donmar

ACTORS fall into two broad by wanting to look sexy or categories: those who play themselves and those who play other people. One type gets recognised in the street rather more than the other. Last year, your ego in the character." while Lynda La Plante's Trial screened. Helen McCrory found herself dragged into a puh debate about the moral issues thrown up by the series. "I assumed arrogantly that this conversation had been sparked off by the fact that they knew who I was. They asked me my opinion and I realised after about 10 minutes they had no idea."

You can see why, McCrory is currently at the Donmar in In a Linde Horld of Our Own, a new play by Gary Mitchell in which she puts on an Utster accent to play a born-again Christian in the heart of Protestant Belfast. In Sand and Deliver, a BBC film by Les Blair, she plays a feekless English paotographer in Glasgow, In The James Gang, a road movie directed by Mike Barker, she's a Scot who fetches up in Wales. The Donmar play opens the theatre's annual "Four Corners" season: it sounds as if McCrory could play all four corners herself.

If this nomadism has a name, it's character acting. It may be too elastic a connection. but it's worth noting that Me- all The Foundry's criteria. Crory is the daughter of a Glaswegian diplomat and a Welsh physiotherapist who spent her childhood moving from Scandinavian pillar to African post. Her accent is pure English girls' hoarding school (with a nicotine flavourdark eyes and four-square Celtic bone structure, you can't see her wielding a lacrosse stick. She has got through most of her twenties without playing the love interest, unless you count Nina in The Seaguill (at the National with Judi Dench).

For her most prominent leading role so far, in the BBC's hardhitting Streetlife, she bleached her curls blonde and donned a Weish accent to play a dpregnant single mum on a grim Cardiff estate. She was next found up at as a surgeon's repugnantly amhitious daughter Jalongside Ian

Richardson in The Fragile Heart. "If you're willing," she explains, "to have the same expretty - then there are a lot of parts that are open to you. If there's one interesting thing about acting, it's trying to lose

In a Little World of Our Own and Retribution was being is McCrory's first stage role since Les Enfants du Paradis, Simon Callow's epic calamity at the Barbican, "They panned us," she says of the critics. "It was a very long show: people came with humfluff and left with grandchildren. It was one of those real clichés: in the rehearsal room, everybody was completely behind it; and when it came on to the stage, it was a big aircraft hangar and the staging really didn't belp the play."

That experience was presumably one of the spurs that made McCrory take the rare step, at least among stage actors, of jointly starting her own company. Her mild dyslexia notwithstanding, she now has to read even more scripts than she would as an actress. In its first year, her company, named The Foundry, has helped mount four new productions, including Neverland by Phyllis Nagy at the Royal Court. In a Little World of Our Own, a busy thriller that has already won Gary Mitchell the "Best New Play at the Irish Theatre" award, meets

"I wouldn't say it's a backlash against this new wave of young playwrights," McCrory says, "but you go and see their plays and say, 'Yeah, that's what I thought when I was 16. But I'm 28 and I don't really want to cut off half my brain in order to understand ing) although, with her wide, your writing. Also a lot of plays are really TV plays or poems, but they're not theatrical. We talked to a lot of literary agents about the fact that we wanted to do conventional, well-crafted plays that are about something, aren't just sexy with lots of guns and sensationalism. It's fashionable and therefore transient and what's the point in doing them?"

film Stand and Deliver, about a London stand-up (Phil Daniels) who does two gigs one weekend in Glasgow, was to spend four the other end of the social map. months in Glasgow working with writer-director Les Blair. pectations of yourself that many easioned by Blair's refusal to



The point of doing the BBC Helen McCrory and Paul Hickey rehearse 'In a Little World of Our Own'

feet, but McCrory is delightfully kooky as an artistic butterfly of

Blair went through the lawhose working-method hears borious process of constructing comparison with Mike Leigh's. a character with each actor "so There's a rambling, inconse- you don't just end up playing quential feel to the piece, oc- yourself in Glasgow doing a different job. It takes a lot of balls male actors have ~ and many deliver anything as staid as a to do that because there is no women actors deny themselves plot that stands on its own two security there, there is no safe-

ty net. I spent my first few weeks seconds ... Mr Cruise will be on ing The Seagull, Fil try and come thinking, what happens if noth- set in 30 seconds ... Mr Cruise and see it." (He didn't.) And ing we come out with is of any is walking on set." And was it how tall is he? "Taller than me. interest to anybody

curiosity that she took the screen role of a whore who is hitten by Tom Cruise in Interview with the a studio film works. It literally is, doing The Seagull at the time,

It was in a similar spirit of look him in the eye? "I wasn't are taller than me." told not to. We had a rehearsal the night before, after he and Mr Pitt had finished filming, and no. 'In a Little World of Our Own' Vampire. "I wanted to see how he was completely normal, I was 'Mr Cruise will be on set in 60 and he said, 'I hear you're do- London WC2 (0171-369 1732). coming from such a big family,

opens 8pm tonight, Donmar

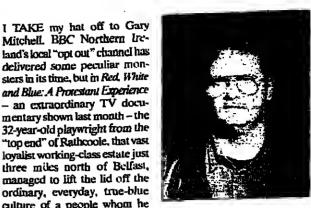
I TAKE my hat off to Gary Mitchell. BBC Northern Ireland's local "opt out" channel has delivered some peculiar monsters in its time, but in Red, White and Blue: A Protestant Experience - an extraordinary TV documentary shown last month - the 32-year-old playwright from the "top end" of Rathcoole, that vast loyalist working-class estate just three miles north of Belfast,

culture of a people whom he obviously holds dear. As in the 12 strongly worded radio plays he has written since 1990, Mitchell's subjects are unfailingly blunt: the beertin culture of the Drumcree heano; family-man paramilitaries under threat of death; even a three-part drama on the

touchy subject of the RUC. "Sure, they're political plays." he says, "but, if that's part of life, why shouldn't it be part of a play? There's a kind of black comedy in the way someone says 'Oh, did ye hear they killed Billy Wright?" in between a conversation about going to get the shopping, and I'm afraid that's the way it is ... "

A tense, eye-opening livingroom whodunit about a UDA hardman, his mentally retarded brother and a menacing little paramilitary peace-broker, his 1995 break-through play, In a Little World of Our Own, opening tonight in a new staging at London's Donmar, probes the tit-fortat implications of an unsolved sectarian atrocity. Set against the 1994 ceasefires, it's an allegory of the violently imposed order within a besieged community -"the mindset that believes the world ends at the red-whiteand-blue-painted kerbstones on the way out of the estate".

Like all his work, it reveals a staunchly sceptical attitude to the sectarianism of the North. How does he get away with it? "Nobody hassles me," he says. "A long time ago, my family were big in the UDA, which was then a le-Photographs: Geraint Lewis gitimate organisation and people. thought very highly of it. When people, including my family, just work, he spends his time there. walked away. But I've got nine writing, hanging about. don't mess with them. My dad's should I go anywhere else? I the smallest one, and I'm the love this place. I really do, and smallest of my family, so maybe I think the people who leave are that's the genetic line that's com- like rats deserting a sinking ing through. I was always the kid; ship. I mean, there's a lot of Warehouse, Earlham Street, 1 was heavily protected and, work to be done here...."



Always blunt: Gary Mitchell

they couldn't hrowbeat or exerce me. People would expect certain things of you, but you just don't deliver, it's as simple as that."

Born into a Congregational family, Mitchell was educated locally. "We never learnt trish history in school, it was all English history, geared towards the exams. I think that's why, when we meet Catholics and start arguing about history, we lose."

After long years on the dole. he spent a rough two years in the civil service. "You might say a monkey could have done my job but, honestly, monkeys are too creative. My bosses all seemed to think I was just scum, because I came from Ratheoole, and there were all these regulations, like not being allowed to wear red-white-and-blue. They even had a problem with my Crystal Palace mug, It was ridiculous, I couldn't cope."

Near desperation, he joined a drama group, began writing for the first time in his life, and wrote a stage play, The World. the Flesh and the Divil. It was rejected by the group but quickpicked up by director Pam Brighton at the BBC, and he basn't looked back since.

Despite his growing success, Mitchell still lives with his folks in Rathcoole. Since the Troubles, the population has dropped from 17,000 to 8,000, while the forced eviction of most of its Catholics has turned it almost 100 per cent Protestant, Mitchell has no inil became heavily criminalised in: tention of relocating, however, the late 1970s and 1980s, a lot of when he's not travelling with his

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Dave Simpson's hen-night comedy may succeed in pulling in the girls but, says Paul Taylor, it's still four pouches short of 'The Full Monty'

three male strippers are facing a stiff challenge. The remaining member of the quartet is a college student, so it stands to reason that he is able to locate the female clitoris without turning a hair. But can the others given that one is a clandestine gay (Matt Healy), one (Damien Child) has been engaged for three years to a frigid shopaholic, and the last (Michael Magnet) is a preening pint-sized Mike Tyson (but without the delicacy and consideration). The student (Mark Prentice) executes a poster-sized sketch of the relevant area and the men gawp at it with all the gormless puzzlement of Ronald Reagan invited to find Nicaragua on a map of the world. When they each plump, their aim proves to he just about as bad as this Predating it and already into

a fourth national tour, Girls' Night Out by Dave Simpson now struts into the West End clinging to the lunchhox of The Full Monty. Focusing on a northern Feast of Flesh Club, it includes male strip routines (all choreographed by the director, Carole Todd) that, if they don't have the provincial charm of the

Back in their dressing-room, movie, are likeably goodhumoured in their self-mocking parody of swollen-headed male prowess. Men in the audience will feel far less excluded than they did at, say, Cliff Richard's Heathcliff or at the recent Women on the Verge of HRT, where the spectacle of middleaged females rushing to the stage to touch hands and teddies with ultra-safe middle-ofthe-road performers made one have doubts about the human race in general.

A camera panning over a line of humourlessly hypnotised males, a drink in one hand and an itch in the other, is the standard screen method of presenting men watching women strip. On stage and off here, the predominantly female audience gets itself going, all right, but never stops seeing the funny side.

In a rather priggish proveals that he was initially slightly wary of the subject matter and told his producer that, if he were to take on the project. "the dyworking-class hen-night at the namics of the play wouldn't be male stripping with surround scenes as wallpaper; it would be funny, with dramatic and character developments and, hope- at a urinal in the Gents of a fully, with several layers, but - working men's club (there be-

from the women's point of view." It's fascinating to find that this was his intention, for what he has produced makes Are You Being Served? look as though it were scripted by George Eliot.

In addition to The Full Monty, a telling point of comparison is with Willy Russell's Stags and Hens, a 1978 play (and later film) that also homes in on a gender-split prenuptial Northem knees-up. A measure of how gramme note, Dave Simpson re- liberated Girls' Night Out actually is can be gauged by looking at all three works' takes on the ticklish topic of public loos, those supposed hastions of male/female exclusivity.

In The Full Monty, a woman is viewed, by a man in hiding, having a raucous stand-up slash "amateur" efforts in the hit most importantly of all - written ing so few working men now)

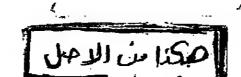
during an evening of Chippendales-rip-off fun. It's an emblem of how emasculated the men feel ("I tell you, when women start pissing like us, we're finished") in a film where the women hold the economic power hut, ironically, the ac-

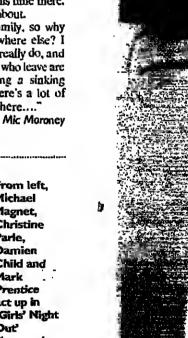
There's a political dimension in Stags and Hens, too; here the mates of the drunken groom-tobe invade the Ladies to stop the bride-to-he from calling the wedding off. Trapped in the cruddy club with no conventional exit route, she, in turn, invades the Gents, smashes the male friends feel she's letting the side_down. "What would

the time and it's only when his posing pouch comes adrift that she recognises him. Shades of President Clinton and those allegedly distinguishing marks? window and escapes from a No. it's because it's shaped like stunted life where even her fe- a banana, which gives you some idea of the standard of single entendre on offer here. Even happen if every woman did these are explained: "Sarah - 1 that, ch?" asks one of them. think I'm rigid!" "She means "Who'd be married today if we frigid!" Oh, right.

Girls' Night Out thinks it's hip because it allows one woman to knce a chauvinist pig in the balls and another to admit to not having had an orgasm until she was 50 (with an adulterous lover). It fails to see, by and large, that the females are (from the sevenmonth-pregnant ninny with a whine like a burglar alarm to "Miss MFI Bargain Hunter 1998") insulting stereotypes. Even allowing for the fact that one doesn't expect the Vassar Essay Society at a workingclass hen night, the hrains of Simpson's female creations seem (thanks to him, not to them) to be every hit as much between their legs as are the men's. The show lands some way wide of the G-spot,

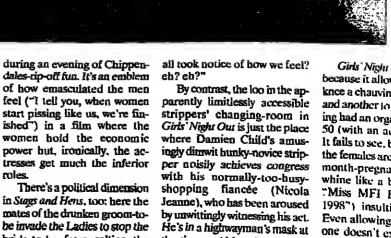
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From left Michael Magnet, Christine Parle, Damien Child and Mark Prentice act up in 'Girls' Night Out Photograph:

Robin Watson



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For a fresh new look, focus on the latest from four British designers, says Fashion Editor Tamsin Blanchard. Pictures by Sheridan Morley

T MAY not feel like Spring just et, but on Planet Fashion the eason is well on its way. Most women do not begin the season with a brand spanking new vardrobe; one key piece can be treat. We have selected four lesigner looks — from four critish labels — to get you into

It would not be spring 1998 without a mention of Alexander McQueen. You hear his name often enough, but what are his clothes actually like? They're not at all pointed shoulders and bum-hugging trousers. It's intricate cutting that makes his clothes so special. Accord-

is hosting a tea party for another label, Soll, at the end of the week. Berardi knows how to make a show-stopper - the Sicilian lace dress worn by Naomi Campbell for his show last October took 14 women, four months to make, and will be available to order, at a cost in excess of £14,000. But he can also make wearable clothes, including plunging V-neck sweaters in black, blue or baby pink, pleated mini skirts, and basket-weave tango dresses.

Food for thought: if you like your fashion a little more stark and intellectual, Belgium's Martin Margiela is the man. His



ing to Angela Quanitrell, who bys his collection for Liberty, Oucen is bought by women wo want something more than ust a skillful hit of tailoring: ey want to be noticed.

For something a little less drmal, YMC is a two-year-old British label for both men and women, selling functional clothing - those in the know recognise the cool minimalism of a khaki YMC jacket or the unfussy cut of a pair of trousers.

If you want a tip for a new name, invest in a piece of Trisun Webber. This is his first colection since graduating from Lentral St Martin's and he is a ame to watch. Browns bought vebber's graduation collecon, selling it "to order" which heans that they had a few seect customers for his sliced and pliced leather in mind. This eason he will reach a wider aulience. Look out for sharply taiored red leather jackets with a plit seam up the back.

Antonio Beradi is another St Martin's wunderkind who makes seriously sexy clothes. Backed by an Italian manufacturer, his clothes are beautifully finished. Fresh from his collection shown at London Fashion Week, Berardi has designed a leather collection for Italian company Ruffo which was preented in Milan last night, and

first collection for Hermes is unveiled in Paris next week. The leader of the deconstruction movement of the early Nineties, Margiela has turned clothes inside out, taken them apart and sewn them up again, and even unpicked the Stockman dressmaking dummy and used it as the basis for a collection. For spring, Margiela has used the humble plastic carrier bag as inspiration. His signature label tacked onto each garment has become synonymous with the best of modern design.

All the clothes featured on this page are available at Liberty. The Independent' is hosting a reader evening at the store on Wednesday 25 March, 6.30pm -8.30pm. The first 250 readers to apply for tickets are invited to be talked through the collections for men and women by 'The Independent' stylist. Sophia Neophitou, and the fashion editor, Tamsin Blanchand. Expert advice will help solve your new season shopping problems and there will be a 15 per cent discount available on fashion purchases bought on the night. Tickets are £5, including a free goody bag from NARS cosmetics, champagne and canapés. Sena a cheque payable to Libeny Pic to Jo Childs, Liberty Press Office. Regent Street, London WIR 6.4H.



Above: Black and white Prince of Wales check and pinstripe dress, £255 by Alexander McQueen, available from Liberty, Regent Street, London W1, Browns, 23-27 South Molton Street, London W1, Harvey Nichols, Knightsbridge, London SW1, Harrods, Knightsbridge, London SW3, Joseph, 77 Fulham Road, London SW3. Far left: Red leather jacket with slash back, £750, by Tristan Webber, from Liberty, Koh Samui, 65 Monmouth Street, London WC2.





Above left: Black & silver lace-up dress, £1,800, by Antonio Berardi, from Liberty, A La Mode, 36 Hans Cresent, London SW3. Above right: Beige skirt, £75, sky blue t-shirt, £35, grey jacket, £165, all by YMC, from Liberty, Duffer of St.George, 29 Shorts Gardens, London WC2, Browns Focus, South Molton Street, London Wf, navy socks, £4.99, by Hue, from department stores nationwide; loafers, £49.99, by Office, Neal Street, London WCI. Stylist, Sophia Neophitou Hair and Makeup, Flora Moore for Jo Hansford, Model, Camilla at Storm

Ironing emerges as next big thing

Milan Fashion Week, and shopping frenzy is in the air. British designers are known for their challenging ideas, but in Milan all of that goes right out of the window. Ideas are replaced by shopping lists, as the fashion press concentrate on how they can update their wardrobes.

At Prada, however, Miuccia came over all intellectual with her collection for autumn/winter '98, entitled "Cut-Out". "Emotion of THE NEW DRESS is the physical pleasure of wearing THE CHANGE," read the show notes.

"IRONING AS DECO-RATION," they declared. Editors looked at each other in bafflement. Perhaps we had missed something in the translation, as the entire British press sat in our backrow seats, Fashion Siberia.

As the show began, we realised that staying at home doing the ironing is about to become the hip thing. Shift dresses are meticulously folded up into a tiny square and pressed until the crease marks are razor sharp.

At last, status dressing that doesn't have to cost a penny. You can do it yourself with a touch of steam. But the

MILAN DIARY



clothes seemed strangely irrelevant as close-ups of the shoes were projected onto screens at each side of the catwalk. They came in the form of two-tone red and white patent leather mules, white patent 1960s pixie boots, shiny T-bar high-heeled mules and chisel toe heels became top of every fashion victim's shopping list for autumn.

If Prada is about shoes, the Italian knitwear family Missoni is most definitely about clothes. Real, wearable clothes. The ageing founders of the company, Tai and Rosita Missoni, have handed over the design reigns to their daughter, Angela, and made the label credible after xx years in husiness by employing Mario Testino - otherwise known as Super Mario - to soup up the advertising.

The clothes were both upto-the-minute and classically wearable. There were the signature stripy tops, tweedy knitted coats, and Lurex basket-weave dresses, all in rich oil-slick colours. The pleated skirt that dominated the shows in London and Milan so far was made to flatter in the form of a knife-pleated knitted wrap-around skirt that would look fabulous whatever the size of your hips, And that, surely, is worth a place on anybody's shopping list.

Tamsin Blanchard

OUT OF THE CLOSET

This week Holly Davies talks to Suzanne Clements of design duo Clements Ribeiro to discover what's lurking in the back of her wardrobe

We are just about to move house and I'm seven months' pregnant.

I've been living in four bias cut dresses that I made up out of scraps in the studio, My cashmere cardigans still fit me just about, I've got bags of them - I'm a bit of cardi queen. After every collection I get them made for me in every colourway

The only thing I can still wear from my orig-

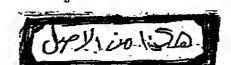
"At the moment I have no wardrobe secrets. really is a slimming colour, so now most of my

clothes are black and long.

The collection we've just finished for Autuma-Winter ended up with quite a few long black things in it, which is very "un-us". I generally find the tighter the clothes the better -I can't bear the thought of looking like a tent. Everything has to be really practical too, which means all my fab Manolo Blahnik shoes are out. Our manufacturer is making me some inal wardrobe is my red Comme des Garcons cashmere baby clothes that I'm really excited dress - I love it, it's virtually the only coloured - about - we're going to have little matching outpiece I wear now. I've discovered that black fits. It sounds really naff, but I can't wait."







IT WAS the work ethic writ large; the declaration on the form said: "I declare that I will be better off in work," This was to become our mantra - that we single parents living on income support who had joined Harriet Harman's project to get us off benefit and into work would reap the rewards.

After several years in Paris I was unprepared for this new version of Britain, I returned here with my threeyear-old daughter, only to be shocked at the searcity of childcare and the lack of opportunities, in France lone parents who choose to stay at home receive much higher benefits than in Britain, Childcare is subsidised; you pay 10 per cent of net income.

Like many women with children, the most attractive solution was parttime work, but finding something suitable is difficult. So I was interested in trying one of the Government's New Deal courses, New Labour's answer to lone-parent poverty.

Gingerbread, the lone parent charity, in partnership with Training for Life, twhich usually provides training for young people) runs a six-week course, during school hours. Job search worksbops are provided, with help in deciding career direction and CV writing. It also offers the all important help with the cost of childcare. Most of the employees are unem-

ployed "volunteers" working for either £10 extra a week on their benefits or, in two cases, working for the cost of childcare. Every day of the fast-track week started at least an hour and a half tate and, three weeks into the course, there have been no workshops to date.

For people with pre-school children there is either an in-house creche or £35 weekly towards childcare hut I pay £70 a week for my daughter's nursery.

We were also told we would be introduced to "Family Friendly" emplovers. When Barclays Bank gave a recruitment talk offering part-time positions as cashiers, we were told the pay was £8.000 gross hut sick pay and carers' leave I for when a dependant is ill) had to be taken out of the 10 days' annual leave. Full-time workers are entitled to four weeks.

The course promised a "personal action plan and targeted CV" hut unlike a job club, it does not provide individual help, telephones, free postage or fax facilities. Yet the cost of finding work is one of the biggest barriers for lone parents.

The group has discussed whether to be honest in interviews about having children. In my experience employers were almost exclusively interested in childcare arrangements rather than my ability to do the joh. One of our advisers, neatly sidestepped the issue: "Try not to bring up the subject, because you won't get the job if you do. If employers have the choice between a person with no dependants and a single mother, you know who they will pick."

I have enjoyed the camaraderic of the course and the pseudo back-towork atmosphere. It has given me confidence to send off for jobs and re-establish old work contacts.

It has also been interesting also to watch how the people on the course have subtly changed even in three weeks. Gone is the softly scruffy look of motherbood. The women have started wearing jackets, shirts and make-up - an office image.

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Kerstin Jones

Hiccups, yes, but Harriet's lone parent deal words. A head start in life? hard for the start in life?



Nothing but the best: Children at the Park Nursery School, Battersea. Their parents place a high priority on formal teaching, and competition is fierce

Photograph; Nicola Kurtz

Children as young as two are having to prove their ability in the scramble for prestige school places.

Celia Dodd reports

'MY GOD, is Isobel reading already? James doesn't even know his alphabet. I'm wondering whether I should take him out of his nursery because they don't seem to be pushing him enough. And if he falls behind now be'll never get in to Oxford".

James is three. His mother's anxieties, overheard outside a London nursery school, are easy to laugh at, but if they're honest, most parents admit that these days the panic about education starts earlier and earlier. Many of the parents whose children have just heard they've won coveted places to private and public schools and the remaining state grammars believe that the achievement can be put down to not only getting them into the best primary schools.

but the best nurseries as well. The canniest families move to the catchment area of a highly desirable state

most academic prep schools) and put their child's name down at birth. The less organised face the uncomfortable prospect of their child being tested for a place at a selective prep school at the age of three or four. Many, who may not have made up their minds about state versus private, want to give their child a head-start just in case.

The result is that it is now common for toddlers who are harely out of nappies to take up places at private nursery schools within weeks of their second birthday, while in the state sector three-plus is still considered the desirable norm.

Parents are also demanding a more formal approach to learning and expect to see results which will stand their child in good stead for the next stage - whether it's an entrance exam or the baseline assessments which all children now face on entry to state primary school. Increasingly nursery school - once seen as a crucial stage of education in its own right, is viewed as preparation for "real" school.

And what about preparation for nurscry? The headmistress of a selective nursery class in north London with four applicants for every place says she expects successful candidates (aged two) to have been to a playgroup, to know bow to socialise. No wonder parents are queuing up primary (often harder to enter than the to get their babies into Tumbletots.

tersea, south-west London, staff are under ly to start". pressure from parents to deliver a more formal curriculum. The vast majority of the Park's pupils - all but two this year - go on to selective private schools nearby or just across the river in Chelsea. Hot favourite is Thomas's Prep - notoriously difficult to penetrate, with four three-year-

olds battling for every place. The talk among those waiting to collect their children rarely strays far from which child has got a place at which school. One mother says, "There is a lot of hysteria about getting in. It's all people talk about at dinner parties and teas. People are obsessed. There's a lot of stress around."

Last term, anxious parents met the teachers and tried to persuade them to concentrate more on the three Rs. Christine Bowman, whose younger daughter started at the Park shortly after her second birthday, says: "The assessments have bad a big knock-on effect. A lot of us want to make sure our children are prepared for the interviews and that they really do know their letters and numbers."

"I used to walk up to school thinking, 'my daughter's bappy, she's having a fun time, that's the whole point of nursery'. But now I want this to be a teaching place, to make sure the girls are tutored to gain en-

At The Park Nursery School in Bat- trance to a prep school. But it's terribly ear-

Christine speaks from experience: last year ber elder daughter failed to get into Thomas's when she was three. She says ruefully: "I had been quite relaxed until I realised that all the other children had interviews at several other schools, whereas Lucy was only trying for Thomas's. I started thinking, my child's not going to get in anywhere. I was probably more stressed out

than I've ever been, it was terrible. "At Thomas's they take your child away in a group of other children for an hour. and you don't what's going on. You're supposed to make polite conversation with the others but all the time you're thinking 'I hope she's not going to pretend she can't talk'. Then all you get is a letter saying she's 'not suitable'.

Schools like Thomas's say they are more interested in whether the child will fit into the school and can socialise; they don't want a child who climbs the wall and scribbles. Jill Kelham, vice-principal, says: 'We're not looking for a three-year old who can already show evidence of reading and writing ability - although if a child spontaneously points out letters or numbers it's noted. We're looking at what their concentration is, what their level of vocabulary is, we're looking for the spark of curiosity, interest and is racing through the reading scheme

level, sociability-which I suppose adds up to teachability."

Other nursery schools are happier to adopt a more formal approach to learning pupils practice correct letter formation, fill in worksheets, learn phonics and do homework. Some take the children for whole. rather than the more usual half-days: some have uniforms; the most desirable even select their pupils through tests at two.

Yet many experts on children's early development believe that such a formal arproach is not merely counterproductive but even harmful in the long term. Earlier this year a study for Channel 4's Dispatches concluded that children in countries where formal school starts up to three years later than in Britain have much better results in litcracy and numeracy. The report also suggests that boys in particular may suffer from an early start to reading. In the more educationally successful countries, such as Switzerland and Hungary, education hefore the age of six or even seven focuses on speaking, concentrating and listening - getting children ready to learn - rather

Weam Bai

than reading and writing. Try telling that to a parent whose three ear-old has ber Start-Rites firmly on the first rung of an increasingly competitive ed ucational ladder, who loves tracing lettes

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Mulberry's luxury goes out of fashion

One of the best-known names in leather goods and designer clothes is in trouble. Nigel Cope finds out why

lovers of expensive leather luggage and designer clothing - and a quintessentially English look that sells so well from Kensington to Kyotn. But now it is in trouble. Mulberry, the luxury goods group hased in Somerset, revealed yesterday that its profits have been devastated by the strong pound, which has affected tourist spending in Britain and hit exports.

Mulberry is now in an extremely precarious financial position. The firm is closing a factory in Somerset, cutting 28 jobs and outsourcing more manufacturing to continental Europe. After issuing its third profits warning in less than 10 weeks it now expects to make a loss of £750,000 this year while its debts stand at £7m. The company's shares bave slumped to an all-time low on

IND203

ITS NAME is well-known to the stock market and experts say the company may not have an independent future.

What has happened to Mulberry is symptomatic of a wider malaise among luxury goods groups, according to Clive Vaughan, of the retail consultancy Verdict Research.

"It is the same story with Harrods, Asprey and Theo Fennell (the upmarket jewellers). They had a good ride off the back of a weak pound. Now it has turned against them," he says.

The economic turmuil in the Far East, where Burberry raincoats and Mulberry handbags have been so popular, has only served to compound the difficulties. There have been profits warnings from Gucci and poor results from Burberry. Even the likes of Louis Vuitton and Bulgari have been finding the going tough.



Roger Saul: Started international business with £500

Mulberry's decline is a bitter blow for its entrepreneurial founder, Roger Saul. Now 47, Mr Saul started Mulberry in 1971 with the £500 given to him as a 21st birthday present by his parents. He made leather chokers on his kitchen table and sold them to Biba, the trendy London bontique. Now Mulberry sells its

clothing, accessories and "home" collections in 32 countries around the world. The prices are bigh with a small leather document case retailing at £119, while a leather holdali will set you back £199. Then there are the organisers, wristwatches, belts and sun-

It has enabled Mr Saul to

live what might be described as a "Mulberry life". He is married to Monty, a former Christian Dior model and lives in a converted Somerset farmhouse crammed full of luxuriously uphoistered sofas and designer knick-knacks. He gets colouring ideas from the flowers in his walled garden. And he adds a dash of derringdo to his English countryside lifestyle by occasionally racing his 1932 Alfa Romon 8C in the Mille Miglia, the Italian classic car race.

Mr Saul's problem now is that Mulberry is just too small to match the marketing muscle of Louis Vuitton or Gueci. It cannot cut prices for fear of damaging the "élite" status of the brand. It can only cut costs and hang on.

Retail experts say Mulberry may fall victim to a takeover. either from a rival luxury brand or a wealthy individual seeking a trophy asset. Dickson Poon. the Hong Kong-hased entrepreneur who owns half of Harvev Nichols, may be interested. It is now available at a knockdown price of £8m.

3

17/OBITUARIES

Professor Richard Pear

RICHARD PEAR was the first Britain's first professors of psyprofessor of politics at Nottingham University when he was appointed in 1965.

His chair was one of the results of the Robhins expansion of higher education in the early 1960s. Nottingham University had slowly evolved from the University College of 1881, where D.H. Lawrence had studied before the Great War, to full university status in 1948. It was one of the smaller universities and was regarded as a couservative campus despite having had the future Labour leader Hugh Gaitskell, and others like him, on the staff in the 1920s.

In the early 1960s its second transformation got under way and, in keeping with the spirit of the times, the social sciences expanded and stylish modernist buildings were erected. The formidable Fred Dainton took over as vice-chancellor. graduated in Sociology and the TUC's John Monks in Economic History.

However, the balance remained weighted towards its excellent traditional disciplines like adult education, agriculture, pure and applied science, engineering, languages and law. A new medical faculty soaked up the funds at a time when retatively less and less money was available for higher education.

Dick Pear battled in these circumstances at the head of a team of only five, which had to produce quality rather than quantity. He was successful in that graduates with Nottingham Colitics degrees climbed the ladder in many fields. Pear was particularly proud to hear that a number of his students (among them Daria Taylor and Kelvin Hopkins) had been elected to Parliament in May

Although most of the annual intake were normal A level candidates, Pear was sympathetic to "mature" students without formal qualifications. When he retired in 1981 his team had expanded to six and the number of graduates had increased from nine in 1966 to 20 plus by the end of the 1970s. Many other students took courses in Politics.

Pear was born in Manches-

chology. Thomas Hatherley was active in good causes and had a special interest in Pear attended Hume Grammar School, where he was good academically and as a sports-

As a youngster in Manchesthe Mosley's Blackshirts and anti-Fascist activists. As with many others of his generation he swung to the left seeing the Soviet Union as the bulwark against Fascism

From Manchester he embarked upon a Politics degree at the London School of Ecoa Darwin research fellowship of the Eugenics Society, followed lowship at the University of Chicago, in 1939-41. He served briefly with the British Infor-His wife, Evelyn, also an LSE graduate, whom he had met at a Peace Camp in Ludlow, Shropshire, in 1936, worked in the codes and cipher department of the British Consul

General. Anxious to get into the fight against the Nazis, he returned to Britain and was sent to Sandhurst. On graduation he was assigned to the Armoured Corps a party man. Nor was he comhut spent most of his military service in the relative calm of Kenya. He was demobilised with the rank of staff captain.



ter in 1916, the son of one of Pear: informal

In 1947 Pear returned to the LSE as Assistant Lecturer in Pear. His mother, Catherine, Government, advancing to a full lectureship a short time later. In 1959 he was promoted to working-class housing. Dick Reader. His main area of expertise was American government and politics and he published his American Govman. He excelled at rugby and ernment: its theory and practice explained for the English reader in 1955. This was well received ter he became politicised. He and a second edition appeared witnessed poverty in the midst in 1963. He also contributed of plenty, the clashes between to other works on American

He toved the United States but it was the America of the New Deal, Studs Terkel, Henry Fonda, Scott Fitzgerald, Adlai Stevenson and The Graduate, not that of the House of Un-American Affairs Committee, Nixon or Reagan. He was a popnomics in 1935. Here he came ular lecturer, a handsome figunder the influence of Harold ure who took great care over his Laski, Richard Tawney and oth- appearance. He was kind to his The future Lord Hollick er democratic socialists. After students and tried to help where graduation in 1938 he took up possible. He was more interested in teaching than in research. At Nottingham he ran by a Commonwealth Fund Fel- his department on an informal, gentlemanly basis. Though he welcomed Nottingham's more recent achievements he would mation Services in New York, not have fitted in too well with the aggressive managerialism prevalent in contemporary gher education.

> Pear's How People, Vote (1956) was about the British electorate. For some time he was a member of the Labour Party and there was talk of emharking on a parliamentary career. But he was too openminded and independent to be bative enough for the rough and tumble of politics, in any case, as a strong family man, be came to the conclusion that the life of an MP would not have suited him. Nevertheless, he remained a committed socialist and a dedicated secularist to the end.

> > David Childs

Richard Hatherley Pear, political scientist: born Manchester 10 March 1916: Assistant Lecturer in Government, London School of Economics 1945-47, Lecturer 1947-59, Reader 1959-65; Professor of Politics, Nottingham University 1965-81; married Evelyn Canning (one san, one daughter): died Nottingham 17 February 1998.



A. Stuart Gray

the most prominent architects for Britain's National Health Service. Yet Watkins Gray, the practice he captained during the "heroic" period of NHS hospital building in the 1960s, was very different to the one which in 1939 had won the competition for the new St George's Hospital at Hyde Park Corner in London. It is testimony to Gray's managerial skill and commercial acumen that Watkins Gray continued to flourish within the climate of architectural modernism in postwar Britain, a period far

Gray's ascent of the architectural profession had been rapid. Born in 1905, he studied at both the Central School of Arts & Crafts (from 1920) and the Royal Academy Schools (1928-34). It was at these two institutions that his personal architectural reportoire developed, evincing both the Arts & Crafts influences of William Lethaby's Central School and the classical splendour of Sir Edwin Lutyens's architecture at the London's new Westminster RA. His talent was acknowl- Hospital (completed 1938).

removed from the Edwardian

traditionalism of the 1930s.

A. STUART GRAY was one of . edged by numerous medals and prizes won at the RA. Tellingly, his successes were achieved in competitions set by the pompier Edwardian architects ---

William Curtis Green, Sir John

Burnet, Sir Herbert Baker and Sir Edwin Lutyens - and were rewarded with travelling studentships to Italy, to examine at first hand the architecture of the classical and Renaissance world, However the inter-war years also witnessed a period of intense architectural change, and Gray

found himself confronting the problems of designing for modern huilding types and the emerging debate around modern architectural design. He worked on the new cinemas which his subsequent business partner, William H. Watkins (1878-1964), was prodiglously building across the West Country, and also, briefly, on department store design in Burnet & Tait's office at Selfridge's in London, A period with the major inter-war practice of Adams Holden & Pearson hrought Gray into contact with modern hospital design, working with Lionel Pearson on

open a London office. The practice's efforts turned to competitions, and in 1939 Gray won first prize for his proposals for the new St George's Hospital. The design portrayed a grand, dignified huilding, in command of its prominent site and steeped in a calm, strippeddown classicism, topped with pavilions suggestive of Gray's lasting admiration for Lutyens. The design was criticised by the architectural modernists who proposed sleek, unadorned,

glazed slab-blocks for the site. Yet Gray had little cause to worry about such criticisms: even though the project was curtailed with the onset of war the publicity surrounding it caught the attention of -amongst others - the visiting Governor of Trinidad, who commissioned Watkins and Gray to work on a new hospital in the Caribbean.

Gray was made a partner in Watkins's firm, and the practice rapidly expanded on hotel, bank, hospital and commercial commissions in Barbados, Ja-

Watkins poached him hack to work, in Britain or abroad. It was unsurprising, then, that the firm was to play a major role in British hospital schemes under the new National Health Service. Gray's design for the New Surgical Block at Guy's Hospiof the first major post-war hospital projects completed in Britain, and was wetcomed enthusiastically by the press: "The New Guy's House, near London Bridge, is the 'last word' in modern surgical science," declared

the Illustrated London News.

demonstrated a reticent architectural modernism, and the urb" where be lived. And it was scheme was to be one of the last with evident delight that he conhospital projects on which he tinued until recently to discuss played a direct design role. None with authority and conviction the less under Gray's stewardship the practice went from strength to strength designing bold modern hulldings at three major London teaching hospitals in the 1960s (Guy's Tower, the Royal Free Hospital, Hampstead, and St George's Hospital, Tooting)

Recognising Gray's skill, a major share of Watkins Gray's on hospital design and publish in

His involvement with the firm be nurtured lessened upon his retirement in 1968, and his attentions shifted once more to the Edwardian period, culminating in his encyclopaedic tal, London (1955-61) was one Edwardian Architecture (1985).

Undaunted by his advancing years, he continued to publish into his late eighties, jointly authoring two books, Fanlights (1990) and Hampstead Garden Suburb (1992). His astounding recollection of biographical and architectural detail remained Gray's tower-hlock design undiminished, as did his appetite for the Hampstead "subthe design and detailing of the picturesque cottage in which he lived, and the qualities of the muscular Lutyens huildings in the North Square nearby.

Jonathan Hughes

Alexander Stuart Gray, orchitect: whilst also undertaking major born Gravesend, Kent 15 July 1905; hospital projects in Manchester, married 1932 Avis Radmore (died maica, Nigeria and elsewhere. Bristol, Exeter and Bradford. 1980; one son, two doughters): Hospital design constituted Gray himself continued to lecture London 20 February 1998.

Cardinal Jean Balland

ago, on 21 February, that Jean of Lyons for less than three cretion is obviously essential. Balland, Archbishop of Lyons, years. This large episcopate Before being made Archbishop knell before Pope John Paul II (with a population of one of Lyons, Jean Balland had to receive his cardinal's hat. On and a half million) was notorithe morning of 1 March, he ously difficult, but it was nodied of cancer in the Croix-Rousse hospital at Lyons. He communities spoke in his the most controversial and was 63. He had been a cardinal

that he had been unwelt - his doctor had accompanied him Church. Most emphasised one to Rome, and it had been obvious that they had mounted the stairs at Saint Peter's. Rome with some difficulty-the news of his death came as a shock and people in Lyons were quick to pay tribute to ed form of praise. But in the

IT WAS less than two weeks him. He had been Archbishop French Catholic Church disticeable that all the religious praise, including integrist divisive of commemorations, Catholics, Muslims, Jews, Although it was known Protestants, Armenians and members of the Orthodox of France. quality: Jean Balland was discreet, he did not seek publicity (unlike his predecessor,

Archbishop Decourtray). At first sight, to be called "l'archevêque discret" is a limit-

heen Archhishoo of Rheims from 1988 to 1995. There he had the responsibility of preparing the 1,500th anniversary of the baptism of Clovis, the first king

This had supposedly taken place in 496, although historians denied this, and had been performed in the haptistry at Rheims, although archaeologists claimed that it had not yet been huilt. More seriously, traditionalists claimed that

baptism of France and that to be French was to be Catholic, but republicans claimed that France was a lay state and that it was necessary to beware of the encroachments of the Church.

Balland had to enter these controversics, all the more so because in planning the commemoration he had to raise money. The municipality of Rheims originally offered to pay some 2.6 million francs. but this use of taxpayers' monev was challenged. It was only with tact and discretion that Balland was able to set in motion the financial arrange-

the bantism of Clovis was the ments for exhibitions, concerts as Bishop of Evreux. Gaillot had churches. He opposed the vioaccompany the ceremony.

> Pen and the Front National. Already in 1992 Le Pen had wanted to begin his campaign opposing Maastricht against citement. He was intensely the hackground of Rheims Cathedral. Balland closed the building and cancelled the mass that Le Pen had planned to attend. In 1995, he organised resistance to Le Pen's intention to es. "We must not put the demonstrate in Rheims in the immigrant populations in imname of Clovis.

> Gaillot from his pastoral duties meet the people inside the

He had also to deal with Le and after his dismissal he again became a media hero, arousing considerable public support. Balland sought to avoid this ex- tion was his continual refusal practical. "Do you realise that the episcopal conference. This a hundred priests are ordained each year, and that 800 die

each year?" He reorganised the parishpossible situations," he stated, Discretion was necessary in and frequently visited the Lyons. It was in January 1995 worst suburbs of Lyons, not growers, men who knew about that the Pope relieved Jacques to be photographed, but to silence.

and dramatic displays, to supported contraception and lent demonstrators against condemned priestly celibacy abortion, but worked with the educational ideas of the Familles de France. Another example of discre-

> to accept the presidency of body is frequently at odds with the Cardinal Archbishop of Paris, Jean-Marie Lustiger. The many problems of the Catholic Church in France today are not to be solved by internal quarrels. So believed this son and grandson of wine-

> > Douglas Johnson



Jean Balland, priest: born Bué, France 26 july 1934; ordained priest 1961; Bishop of Dûon 1982-88; Archbishop of Rheims 1988-95: Archbishop of Lyons 1995-98; named o cardinal 1998; died Lyons, France 1 March 1998.

Amouncements for Gazette BIRTHS, MARRIAGES & DEATHS (Births, Adoptions, Marriages, Deaths, Memorial services, Wedding amiversaries, in Memoriam) should be sent in writing to the Gazette Editor, The Independent, I Canada Square, Canary Wharf, London EM SDI., telephoned to 071-293 2012 (24-hour answering machine 071-293 2011) or faxed to 971-293 2010, and are charged at £6.50 a line (VAT extra.) OTHER Gazette announcements (notices, functions, Forthcoming marriaget, Marriages) must be abortited in writing (or faxed) and are charged at £10 a line, VAT extra. They should be accompanied by a daytime telephone number.

The OBITUARIES e-mail address is

ROYAL ENGAGEMENTS The Princet of Waies afternis a concert of S Paul's Cathedral, London EC4, as part of the 1908 Byzantine Festival, Prince Ed-word, Trustee, the Duke of Edinburgh's Award, attends the Friends Reception of Budeingham Palace and a dature for the technique of the award's Charter For Busi-Buckingnam Carrot and a uniter for the members of the marri. Charter For Business at St James's Palace. The Princess membras of St James's Palace. The Princess
Ress at St James's Palace. The Princess
Ress at St James's Palace. The Project.
St Holens, Merseyside, and, as President
of the Patrons, Crune Concern, attends a
High Crime Neighbourboods Seminar at
Rafforoid Community Comprehensive
School, Kirkly, Merseyside. The Duchess
of Gloucestert, Patron. Ashah (Association for Spina Brida and Hydrocephalus).
opens the new South East Regional Ofties. New Barnet. Hertfurdshire. The
Dulor of Rore, Patron. visits the Stoke
Manderille Burns and Reconstructure
singsty Research Trust, Stoke Mandeville
Hospilal. Astesbury, Buckinghantshire.

Hospital, Arlesbury, Buckinghantshire. Changing of the Guard The Household Cavalry Mounted Regi-ment mounts the Queen's Life Guard at ment mounts the Queen's Life Guard at Horse Guards, Ham: F Company Seets Guards meanns the Queen's Guard, at Buckingham Palace, 11. Warn, band pro-vided by the Collabream Guards.

Birthdays

Sir David Barnes, chief executive officer. Zeneca. 62: Mr Michael Bar-rett ["Shakin" Stevens"), rock singer. 50; Sir Alan Battersby, Emeritus Professor of Organic Chemistry, Cambridge University, 73; Sir Arthur Bryan, former Lord-Lieutenant for Staffordshire, 75; Mr Kenny Dalglish, fnotball player and manager, 47; Mr Graham Dewling, cricketer, 61; Mr Basil Eastwood, ambassador to Syria, 54; Mr Harvey Goldsmith, pop-music presenter, 52; Mr Bernard Hailink, music director of Covent Garden Opera House, 69; Mr John Hunt, former Headmaster, Roedean 66: Lord Johnston of Rockport, former chairman, NW Area Conservatives, 83: Mr Francis King, author and drama critic. 75; Mr Ralph Kirshbaum, cellist, 52; Mr Ivan Lewis MP. 31; Miss Miriam Makeba, singer, 67; Mr Stuart Mawson, otolaryngologist, 80: Mr Patrick Moore, astrono 75: Miss Paula Prentiss, film and television actress, 50: Mr Chris Rea, rock musician, 47: Mr Alao Sillitoe. wright and novelist, 70: Mr Pete Skellern, composer and singer, 51; Sir Keith Stuart, chairman. Associated British Ports Holdings, 58.

Anniversaries

Births: Antonio Lucio Vivaldi, composer and violinist, 1678; Sir Henry Raeburn, portrait painter, 1756: Thomas Sturge Moore, poet and wood-engraver, 1870. Deaths: Saladin, Suhan of Egypt and Syria, 1193: Sir Thomas Malory, writer of More d'Arthur, 1470; Bernard Gilpin, clergyman. "Apostle of the North", 1583: Nikotai Vasilyevich Gogol. playwright and novelist, 1852;

William Willett, builder, and promoter of "daylight saving time", 1915; Antonin Artaud, actor, playwright and stage director, 1948; Sir Charles Scott Sherrington, neurologist, 1952; (Cuthbert) Dale Colling, internalist and populist 1956; William journalist and novelist, 1956; William Carlos Williams, physician and poet, 1963: Richard Thomas Church, poe and novelist, 1972. On this day: the Royal National Lifeboat Institution was founded, 1824; the Forth Bridge was afficially apeced, 1890; the Comintern (Communist International) was formed, 1919; German rudio declared that Dresdeo had been "wiped off the map of Europe" by Alwiped in the map to Europe by Ar-lied bombing, 1945; the US nuclear submarine Nautilus travelled under the North Polar icecap, 1958; North Sea gas was first piped ashore near Durham, 1967; Edward Heath resigned and Harold Wilson became prime minister, forming a Labour government, 1974. Today is the Feast Day of St Adrian and his s, St Casimir of Poland and St Peter of Cava.

Lectures

National Gallery: Alexander Sturgis, "Painting and Sculpture (1); Degas the Sculptor", tpm; Keith Christiansen (Patrick Matthieseo

Sèvres Porcelain". 1pm.

Lecture t. "Sienese Painting in the Age of the Renaissance", 6.30pm. Victoria and Albert Museum Fiona Leslic, "Renaissance Symbols of Love", 2.30pm. Tate Gallery: Janathan Blackwood

"English Sculpture in the European Context", tpm. Walface Collection: Resalind Say ill, "The Hertfords as Collectors of

LAW REPORT: 4 MARCH 1998

Man hanged in 1952 for murder is cleared

Regina v Mattan (deceased); Court of Appeal (Criminal Division) (Lord Justice Rose, Vice-President, Mr Justice Holland and Mr Justice Penry-Davey) 24 February 1998

IN THE LIGHT of material which had not been disclosed to the defence at the time of a murder trial in 1952 which had resulted in the hanging of the accused, the conviction could not now he regarded as safe and would be quashed.

The Court of Appeal allowed the appeal of Mahmoud Hussein Mattan against his conviction of murder on 24 July 1952 at Glamorgan Summer Assize, for which he was sentenced to death.

On 19 August 1952 the Court of Criminal Appeal refused his application for leave to appeal, and on 8 September he was hanged in Cardiff Prison. The case was referred when the murder must have Cover's identification of the apto the Home Secretary in 1969, been committed. However, as pellant as credible. Counsel for

but he saw no reason to re-open a result of the investigation by the appellant had submitted the case. The present appeal against conviction followed a referral of the case to the Court of Appeal by the Criminal Cases Review Commission. Michael Mansfield QC and Anne Shamash (Bernard De Maid & Co, Cardiff) for the appellant; John Griffith-Williams QC (Crown Prosecution Service) for the Crown.

Lord Justice Rose VP said that the deceased was a woman called Lily Volpert, who had kept a shop in the Cardiff docks area. On 6 March 1952 her throat had heen cut from side to side from behind. The having been stolen.

The key prosecution witness had told the jury that he had seen the appellant coming out

the Criminal Cases Review that in the circumstances the day after the murder which had statement had not been disclosed to the defence at the time of trial.

present appeal, the prosecution had furnished the defence with copies of entries made in a notebook by a senior police officer who had assisted in the Volpert enquiry. Those entries revealed that Cover had idenmotive was apparently rob- tified the man in the doorway bery, a sum of about £100 as Taher Gass, who, it had emerged, had been tried for murder by stabbing in 1954, had been Harrold Cover, who and had been found not guilty. some crumh of comfort for his by reason of insanity.

Counsel for the Crown had of the shop doorway at the time no longer felt able to rely on it clearly demonstrated five

Commission, it appeared that conviction should be regarded he had made a statement the as unsafe, and the court accepted that submission. For differed materially from his evbetter or worse, and the present idence before the jury. That case showed for worse, it had not been the practice in 1952 for prosecution witness statements to he shown to the de-Furthermore, ahout two fence. The rules now applicable weeks before the hearing of the required far greater disclosure of material to the defence, by the police and the prosecution.

than had been required in 1952. It was a matter for very profound regret that in 1952 the appellant had been convicted and hanged, and that it had taken 46 years for that conviction to be shown to be unsafe. The court could only hope that its decision would provide surviving relatives. The case had a wider significance, in that matters.

First, capital punishment

culmination for a criminal justice system which was human and therefore fallible. Secondly, in important areas, some of which had been alluded to, criminal law and practice had, since the appellant had been tried, undergone major changes for the better. Thirdly, the Criminal Cases Review Commission was a necessary and welcome body, without whose work the injustice in the present case might never have been identified. Fourthly, no one associated with the criminal justice system could afford to be complacent. Fifthly, injustices of the kind in the present case could only be avoided if all concerned in the investigation of crime, and the preparation and presentation of criminal prosecutions, observed the very highest standards of integrity, conscientiousness and

professional skill. Kate O'Hanion, Barrister

INDEPENDENT

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Even Gates must play by the rules

LATER THIS year Bill Gates's Microsoft will unveil Windows 98, the latest, fastest and (it hopes) most "user-friendly" interface between computer users and their machines. However exaggerated some of the claims made for the role computers play in our economy and society, there is no doubt this launch will once again be a great event and will change the way millions of people around the world function on a daily basis. But if Microsoft sticks with its current plans, it will be selling a product which, American courts argue, constitutes a restraint on competition. And that is something even Bill Gates, hero of cyberspace, should not be allowed to do.

The gist of a judgment last December by a federal judge was that the inclusion in the product of Microsoft's own "browser" for the Internet is seriously harming the capacity of other software companies to compete. To defend his company and its strategy Mr Gates appeared yesterday before the US Senate's Judiciary Committee. This committee is not the most distinguished operation, and not just because it is Republican-dominated. But it is still a legitimate forum in which to hold Microsoft to account. and perhaps it may also to act as a proxy for all those non-American computer-users who will be affected by decisions made in the US.

Bill Gates excites admiration across the globe. He is, in the same way as Richard Branson here, one of capitalism's most acceptable faces. Many young people swim happily in information technology culture, and to them Bill Gates has become a cult figure. That he appears to be liberal-minded and progressive in instinct helps endear him more. Yet no conclusive evidence has been produced which says that the market for software, for graphical interfaces or for accessing the Web has floated free of those norms which decree, as they always have, that the consumer's best friend is the fullest competition between keen rivals. Has the historical rule which says that sooner or later even the most benign monopolists start to abuse their power really been suspended? Would Microsoft cease to invest and innovate if computer buyers could choose other operating systems? Of course not. The question thus has to be whether Microsoft's ability to "bundle" a browser with Windows does inhibit competition.

The expert evidence is that it does. The expert evidence also suggests that it would not be so difficult, nor so onerous on Microsoft, if computer users were able to buy Windows and Microsoft's Net products only as separate entities. There is no reason why such an ordinance need prevent product development or technological advance. Bill Gates is an international treasure, but that has not stopped him sulking and throwing fits of pique. Ultimately, however much of a visionary he may be, he is wedded to no interest other than his own. His magnificent achievement in huilding up Microsoft must not now become an excuse for relieving him of the responsibility of playing by markel rules.

Tycoon who taints news



A NEWSPAPER'S lifeblood is its credibility. We may miss a story or we may get only half the story, but we are of value to you only to the extent you are prepared to credit our attempt to get things right. If, say, our foreign correspondents write about conversations with politicians or peasants, husiness leaders or dissidents, they will supply their own interpretation and analysis based on their own experience. There is no question of varnishing, filtration, second-guessing or cunsultation with some boss about his commercial interests: what you see is what you get.

As the full extent of Rupert Murdoch's engagement with the Chinese regime becomes clear, so does his profligacy with his newspapers' capacity to inspire that trust. His editors take his shilling and dance to his tune, wiggling their hips to entertain foreign potentates sitting on their divans. His newspaper. The Times, it is true, always enjoyed a reputation greater than its history warranted: this was the newspaper, after all, which had for decades been in the pocket of Tory politicians. During the First World War it proved to be a compliant tool for profiteering magnates. On the eve of the Second it became a willing accomplice of dictators. Against that backdrop its surrender to Murdoch signifies only because of the hypocrisy involved in pretending (as The Times still does, at great length, especially on the subject of Europe) to speak for the British nation while bending its reportage, let alone its cditorialising, to the whims and profit margins of its owner. -

It seems that once in the Far East Murdoch's men are transformed; they look like travelling salesmen. But on their return - we are supposed to believe - they revert, once again, to speaking freely. Mr Murdoch has just about ripped away whatever tattered remnants were left of his newspapers' pretensions to be concerned with truth. Let's say it out loud. What reader of any Murdoch title can really trust any story or commentary or analysis that touches the interests of Rupert Murdoch? And let's not forget how extensive they are. This could mean that that nothing in, say. The Times to do with sports, the media, North American politics, South-east Asia, China or Australian economics and politics seems free of taint.

The Sun's veracity has been a jest for years. Many credulous people still hoped where they did not believe that somehow The Times, a grand old institution, would keep its hands clean. We now must have the gravest doubts. Rupert Murdoch is an agent of moral debilitation. Across the globe, he seems to be able to turn people capable of doing an honest job into timeservers and courtiers. None of us can ever read any of the words they write without a shudder of contempt.



Spring rain in London: a view of Westminster from the Thames Embankment

Autism and MMR jab

IT WILL cost more, in the long run.

to pay for care of our autistic chil-

dren for life, than to give the measles,

mumps and rubella vaccination as

separate injections, rather than the

couldn't cope with these, becoming

agitated and confused by the noise

We should fund further immedi-

ate research and stop giving the com-

hincd MMR vaccines until it can be

that there is no link between the

MMR vaccine and autism. I applaud

Dr Wakefield and all the research

team for taking the first step, and

making people aware of this condi-

THANK YOU for your report from

the hus on its way from Leek to the

countryside protest (2 March). ft

made mc reflect how little attention

has been paid to the question of what

will happen to land that is going to

be lost to active farming over the next

five to ten years as a result of influ-

ences quite separate from any anti-

ket, the effects of BSE and the like-

An increasingly global food mar-

KAREN GOODALL

End of farming?

Cambridge

proved "beyond reasonable doubt"

and crowds.

February).

Photograph: Brian Harris A 9x12 print of this photograph can be ordered on 0171-293 2534

LETTERS

Post letters to Letters to the Editor and include a daytime telephone number Fax 0171 293 2056: e-mail: letters@independent.co.uk E-mail correspondents are asked to give a postal address. Letters may be edited for length and clarity.

current combined one, as suggested by Dr Andrew Wakefield ("Doctors ly reduction or removal of hill-farmlink autism to MMR vaccination". 27 I quite agree that measles is a rural retreats, golf courses, paintkiller and oo ooe wishes to see a return of this disease but, L for one, would not have given my son the happens to the rest of the land? Who combined MMR vaccine if I had will spread the muck (where will it been aware that there was any come from?), cut the hay and mainchance of him becoming autistic.

My "normal" developing, very easy-going, responsive child is now 24-hour attention and assistance. Our family life is totally split; rarely do these impoverishing influences will we venture out, all four of us tocontinue largely outside the influence of government But will governgether, as Michael's needs have to he considered to prevent ourthursts ment, national parks authorities, of anger and frustration. We're not the National Trust and others start able to do things other families take to plan how to manage the piecemeal demise of large numbers of small upfor granted: playing board-games, going to the cinema, or to the panland farms? Are they the right bodtomime al Christmas. Michael ies to do this?

Threats to hunting and field sports clearly exist, but are, I suggest, less important than those to the livelihoods of upland farmers and to their land, the results of which we are likely to witness in the early years of the next millennium.

PATRICKNAISH Whiston, Staffordshire

IS IT significant that with farmers facing a crisis on a par with that faced by the miners in the early 1990s, with lowering or even loss of their livelihoods. Lord Mancroft (letter, 2 public service remit. We welcome March) feels that it is appropriate that the anger and hitterness should be focused on the threat to hunting?

I am a "townie" through and through, and probably do find it difficult to understand some of the problems affecting the countryside. However, I would have thought that my genuine sympathy and concern for their plight must be worth more than the wealthy, smug and self-satistied country gentry who take advantage of the misfortunes of farmers to promote their own desire to continue with hunting.

Farmers would be better off looking subsidies will put many farmers ing to garner support from all secoul of husiness. After the markets for tors of society (yes even "townies") and disassociating themselves from balling, off-roading and holiday vil- anachronistic interest groups with lages have been satisfied, what whom they have little in common. TONY WHITEHEAD Halifax, West Yorkshire

tain hedges, ditches, drains, walls and THERE IS an obvious alternative to the practices of the bloodsports fra-Market forces are already deter- ternity - go in pursuit of vegetarian shut away in his own world, needing mining what happens to rural trans- alternatives. We already have the piport, shops, schools and pubs, and oneering Quorn Hunt, which has FOR MANY years I have admired shown the way forward. Can we now the verbal dexterity of Gerry Adams hope to see the much kinder activ- and his colleagues - so much clevities of soya baiting and tofu cours- ever than the entrenched bloody-

JELAMPER Wareham, Dorset

BBC in Parliament

TO SUGGEST (leading article, 28 February) that Radio 4's controller, James Boyle, wants to "shunt off" Yesterday in Parliament because it is "boring" is wrong. James Boyle has already made clear that it is his intention to give more choice to Radio 4 listeners. This can be achieved by using long wave - the frequency which is universally available to almost every home in the United

Kingdom. You are right to stress that covering Parliament is part of the BBC's that. But the real public service challenge is to engage new audiences in what is going on in Parliament. That is why we have spent many months talking to viewers and lis-

teners about how best we can do it. The result is an ambitious set of proposals which will strengthen our public service remit in relation to Parliament - with more air time and some fresh formats. The highlights include a new parliamentary programme on BBC 2 and a new service on the Internet, to be launched The Rev ALEC McGUIRE in the spring, which will give access. Leeds

to debates in audio, text and eventually video too. Taken together, this breadth of services, on television, on radio and online, represents an unrivalled commitment to reporting the democratic process.

TONY HALL Chief Executive BBC News London W12

Speaking for the IRA

mindedness of most of the Unionists. But the latest example leaves us with a problem.

of the peace talks is to bring the cycle of violence to an end, and if Sinn Fein now say that they should not be confused with the IRA, how can there be any reliable prospect of the IRA ceasing violence even if the talks succeed?

I suppose the same observation arises across the political spectrum in Northern Ireland. So the question is: whatever the representative politicians may say or agree, how can they deliver peace unless they declare that they speak for the men of violence? Isn't such a declaration rather an important point to have missed?

ASR WALKER Oaksey, Wiltshire

Dome thoughts

IT IS genuinely refreshing to know that the centrepiece of the dome which that nice Mr Mandelson is preparing for us is to be the largest queer (or at least androgynous) one-parent family in history. It's almost enough to cure one of domophobia.

Modern Latin

PICTURE OF THE DAY

ROGER Wordsworth (Letters, 3 March) is mightily optimistic in suggesting that Latin should become the language of the European Union. With its ablative absolutes, subjunctives, declensions, conjugations, pluperfects and semi-deponent verbs, it is unlikely to be a hit with our allegedly dumbeddown two-minute-attention-span culture.

But if we can invent a Euro-currency, why not a Euro-language: a modernised, grammar-pruned, phonetic, gender-free Latin - learning shrewdly from the well-intentioned failures of Esperanto - which would be as syntactically easy as English, as phonetic as Spanish, and close to the linguistic origins of most of the EU territory? Taught in schools throughout the Union as the second language of the 21st century, compared with French and German it would be a

IAN FLINTOFF If one of the principal objectives London SW6

Princess's play

YOU WERE mistaken in stating in your profile of Princess Margaret (25 February) that she directed The Frog - and that it sank without

Alan Jefferson directed the play. which was presented by Judy Montagu, Billy Wallace and Anthony Berry at the Scala Theatre, Charlotte Street, London W1, on I, 2 and 3 June, 1954, in aid of the Invalid Children's Aid Association.

Princess Margaret gave wholehearted support to the venture and attended many rehearsals. The presenters and society cast gave their time freely over many weeks to ensure the success of the production and the fund-raising for the ICAA.

I was a member of the technical staff. The Duke of Devonshire, Lord Porchester, the Marchioness of Dufferine and Ava and Viscount and Viscountess Norwich were but a few of Princess Margaret's friends who participated. ISHBEL BLAND

Twickenham.

At last! You can be at the very heart of the media circus!

hunting legislation.



WEEK BY WEEK, The Independent brings you the best bargains in the media market place.

Last week we guaranteed to have someone carrying the placard of your choice on the Countryside March! (The winner was THE AMERICAN GUN LOBBY SUPPORTS PETER MAN-DELSON'S DOMES)

The week before that we guaranteed that Janet Street-Porter would walk through your garden - and include it in promised that your husband - or somebody indistinguishable from him - would be featured in Jilly Cooper's next novel!

Today we bring you another crop of unrepeatable media offers not to be found in any other publication, exclusive to all Independent readers! (Or, of course, to the readers of any other paper who happen to have bought this paper by mistake.)

So here we go with today's wonderful special offers... PRINT YOUR OWN FRENCH

WORLD CUP TICKETS SET! Yes, with this super-duper up-to-date

Jean Bull printing set, you can actually create your own World Cup tickets for the match you want, in the seat you want! The French may have kept all the tickets for French fans, but they are going to be surprised at just how many English football fans will arrive with their own apparenther next book! The week before that we ly authentic match tickets. Why not sit in a Frenchman's lap with the same ticket number as him! Et puis lui dire de vous foutre le camp...! (Handy French phrase

book comes free...) GET YOUR OWN BEQUEST

IN DIANA'S WILL OFFER! The late Diana, Princess of Wales, left over seventeen million pounds in her will. It's as if she woo the National Lottery seven-

teen times over! That's about 50p for everyone in the country. And yet she didn't leave YOU anything, did she? Honestly, some people... Luckily, that can be put right just by sending in a cheque for £1,000 made payable to "Diana's Favourite Charities". Unbelievable, but that's all it takes to get into Diana's will. You won't get as much back as you pay in, but, as Diana would have said, that's the National Lottery for

BAVE YOUR OWN BOOK PERSONALLY TURNED DOWN BY RUPERT MURDOCH:

Just imagine. For many years you have dreams of having your novel, or your memoirs, published. But nobody sees it your way. They read it and send it back, saying: "Sorry, but you are not even the new Jeffrey Archer - more like the old Gyles Brandreth. It is a load of manure." Just as your self-worth is beginning to crumble, you dis-

cover a new way of getting your book published - by pretending it has been turned down on the personal orders of Rupert "KRM" Murdoch! Yes, any other publisher will take a book spurned by Murdoch! Just think of the dust jacket: "The book that Murdoch wouldn't dare print!" And we can do it for you, for just 5 per cent of the gross profit!

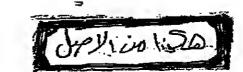
HAVE YOUR OWN DIARIES PERSONALLY GHOSTED FOR YOU BY ALAN CLARK MP!

Alan Clark went to court to stop the Evening Standard running a fake diary by him. He won. This means something. It means that here is a man who genuinely cares about the autheoticity of the written word. Who better than him to get to write your own diary, using his own lavish experience! YOU send us your personal experiences, HE will rewrite them for you in his own inimitable style. Or if it isn't him,

it's someone so close to his inimitable style it makes no difference! A signed copy of Melvyn Brage's new book, "The Evolution of DIY, or, Why Screws Go Clockwise and Not Anti-Clockwise, and What is Clockwise Anyway?"

The fascination of Melvyn Bragg with science is well known - you have almost certainly bought his latest book On Gianus' Shoulders, about great scientists of the past - but not so well known is his interest in technology, culminating in this, his very first book about DIY. In it he poses the great questions of our time, such as "Did God intend round pins or square pins?", "Did God intend screw-in hulbs or bayonet fittings?", "What do we actually mean when we say God?" and "Is a woman's place in the Homebase?"

Send large stamped addressed envelope NOW for full list of other media mart attractions!



Germans glimpse life after Kohl and feel the thrill of change,

IMRE KARACS

In Europe's powerhouse, it's hard to get a haircut on a Monday. But things are changing in the Bonn Republic. About time too.

THE cheers are still echoing round the pubs. There are plenty of hang-overs hut few regrets. The two-thirds of Germans who could not bear the thought of another four years of Helmut Kohl finally have cause to celebrate.

On Sunday Schröder confounded the Cassandras, emerging with renewed strength from the fight considered the most difficult of his long campaign Bild, the country's biggest tabloid, has unceremoniously ditched the Chancellor and appointed itself cheerleader for the Opposition.

The Schröder bandwagon is on a roll, opponents and sceptics of yesterday are clamouring to get aboard. He might not be Herr Blair, but Herr Schröder has a similar ability to win over doubters. Some of the gloom which has enveloped Germany has lifted,: the romantically inclined might say that the Rhine is swelling with hope. Victory is now his for the taking. People in the streets, the shops, and the trams talk of little else.

The Kohl era is almost certainly drawing to a close. As in Britain when Labour won the 1997 election, a generation has grown up in Germany with no first-hand knowledge of a different government in Bonn. The great names of Helmut Schmidt and Willy Brandt belong to a different, distant era.

A generation is bowing out: the last to be shaped by the war and its aftermath. Life after Helmut is hard to imagine. Comedians will lose a fertile source of jokes about his size and appetite. The international implications of his departure will be considerable. When 67-year old Kohl is gone, there will be a new Germany, led by people unencumbered by memories of the Third Reich and corresponding dreams to build a united Europe in its ashes. Mr Kohl's "war or peace" vision has been the driving force of the various pan-European projects of recent years. His successors will not assume that any minor disagreement among neighours must inevitably lead to conflagra They will be EMU-friendly - but for more pragmatic reasons that Chancellor Kohl and they will be more understanding of those who have reservations

Consequently, the "special relationship" with France will lose some of its meaning. Post-Kohl foreign policy will pay more heed to British opinions, and slightly less attention to the whims of the Elysee. Schröder has already indicated that he wants to bring Loudon to the European top table.

In the country shaped in Mr Kohl's image, society is set to undergo its greatest transformation since the war. Like his mentor Adenauer before him, Kohl embodies the values that have made Germany what it is today: studgy, corporate, predictable and utterly boring. The country builds great cars and the

trains do run on time, but in the fields of its former glory - science and the arts -it has produced little of international note in decades. The German media must rank among the dullest in the world. The art of effervescent conversation appears to have fizzled out, and German has become the language in which 80 per cent of the world's handbooks on tax are published.

Chancellor Kohl is proud of these qualities, and for the stability he has created. For decades he has taken the same holiday at the same time of the year at the same Austrian resort. He always wears the same sober suit, and is never a minute late for work.

And now along comes a challenger who disdains the Old Guard's efforts to turn the former powerhouse of Europe into a geriatric ward. They want to do the things people in other countries are allowed to do: make a little noise, go to the shops at their convenience, and be able to get a haircut - even on Mondays and at lunchtime. There are new buzzwords the old guard do not understand: competition, enterprise, service. Five million Germans are on the dole, yet you cannot get your tyre changed on a Saturday afternoon, let alone Sunday. It is time for a change.

Can Germany rid itself of its preoccupation with stability at the level of the lowest common denominator? Is there an equivalent of Prozac for a nation suffering from 50 years of Angst? Herr Schröder promises to unshackle "the creative energies of Germans", liberating them from the drudgery - and comfort - of their daily lives with a dose market economics. He promises to cut taxes to encourage job-creation - something Mr Kohl's conservatives never achieved. He threatens to drive the chronically work-shy off the dole, and proposes to throw the service sector open to free competition. He also talks of the need for. "sensible wages", a very strange concept for the trade-union bound Social Democrat.

Here on the Rhine, we are rubbing our eyes in disbelief. The newcomer is an undependable man - currently on his fourth mar-



riage. He promises upheaval. His politics will be unprdictable. He appears to be making up his economics on the hoof. It remains to be seen whether in this drama, his role will be restricted to that of a blind agent of destruction, a Siegfried in contemporary Wagnerian setting. Or he could become the great moderniser ushering in a new and more dynamic German age. Either way, he is set to do us all a great service by drumming his country out of its torpor. The Berlin Republic, which begins on the eve of the millennium, promises to be a lot more fun than the era of Bonn provincialism it replaces.

Murdoch's media empire: it's global and mighty but not eternal



Tiananmen Square: the next generation of Chinese will be part of a global information community

The days of all-powerful press barons are numbered. But

Hamish McRae says the 21st century will open up markets and minds,

NEWSPAPER commentators find it hard to cope with the row about the spiking of Chris Patten's book by Rupert Murdoch's HarperCollins for obvious reasons. Either they work for one of the myriad parts of the Murdoch empire and find it more convenient to keep morn. Or they work for some other proprietor who is an arch enemy of Mr Murdoch and feel it necessary to whip themselves into furious indignation at his antics.

This is a pity because behind the fuss lies a crucial question. Will, during the first half of the next century, the power of the global media become more concentrated or more diffuse? There is also more specific issue: is Mr Murdoch's attempt to assemble a global media empire (complete with a bit of kow-tow to the Chinese) a model for other empires. or is it doomed to fail?

I suppose I should at this stage make it clear where I am, as the Americans would say, coming from. It happens that I have never worked for the Murdoch empire, not because I see him as the devil incarnate but more because I haven't needed to. The interesting jobs have come elsewhere - I also really enjoy the freedom which papers like The Guardian and The Independent have offered. However HarperCollins were the UK publishers for my latest book and that relationship worked well too. It was not particularly positive about China, but they managed, amongst other things, to sell

not one but two different Chinese translations of it.

So is the Murdoch empire the model? I think the answer is no, but that it is does display some characteristics which will become more important over the next 20 or 30 years.

Not the model? No, because the Murdoch empire, however extraordinary, is not really a single corporate entity. There is no core competence. There are lot of individual competences, lots of skills, lots of brands names, lots of talented people - but no glue. Or rather the glue is the brilliance and personality of one now elderly man. When he goes, the empire will be split up. What Mr Murdoch has seen very clear-

ly is the importance of global distribution. His business is delivering intellectual property to a global market. You may not think of The Sun, or (better example) Titanic as intellectual property, but they are in that they come into the same category of fees and royalties as, say, the proceeds from some medicine whose inventor has won a Nobel prize. Titanic is a coproduction of Fox, part of the Murdoch group. So part of the global profits from what will become the largest grossing movie of all time will go to his

We think of newspapers as an important part of the global media and it is certainly true that the initial money which financed the Murdoch enterprises came from newspapers, British newspapers in fact. But newspapers are not only a tiny corner of global media, but also one of the most fragmented segments of it. With a couple of small exceptions, papers exist in national compartments.

By contrast books and particularly movies cross national boundaries and language boundaries too. We have not yet arrived at a totally free global market for either, but the world is moving rapidly in

that direction. In television - well, we don't know whether it will become a true global medium, like movies, or remain mainly a national one, like papers. I suspect that television will remain mainly national, but with some elements of internationalisation in particular in sport. But the general trend at the moment is undoubtedly towards further globalisation in all media. If you believe in globalisation, you have to believe in getting into China. That is why Mr Murdoch is more prepared to upset the grandees in Britain and America than the grandees in China. Besides he knows we will just whinge and moan, whereas they will bite his back-

Looking ahead, expect other groups to try both to create intellectual property that can be sold on the global market. and to capture global distribution channels for those products. What will those products be? Some will be ones which are already familiar: books, films, sporting events (like Formula One or the Olympics), performances by celebrities (like the Three Tenors). Others will be things which we cannot even conceive of at the moment, or which exist only in embryonic form. It would have seemed extraordinary 20 years ago that one could package three middle-aged men carrying out an elitist activity like opera and start a whole new genre of mass entertainment.

So in another ten or 20 years there will be probably be half a dozen alliances of media groups which will vie to establish global distribution for the products they create or buy. I do not think these will be single monolithic enterprises run by a media tycoon: more likely they will be a series of associations rather like the airline groupings now being assembled. In other words though they will not follow the Murdoch model, they will have some characteristics of the organisation he is trying to put together.

This might seem a hit of a nightmare, and a world where a few organisations did have control over the distribution of most information would certainly be extremely alarming. But in practice I don't think we need worry too much. People everywhere have a good instinct for smelling a rat when they are peddled a party line by a media group. Why does the BBC have a far stronger global brand image than BSkyB? Because it has built up a reputation for integrity over three generations and that reputation will continue to be defended by independent-minded jour-

Secondly the information revolution means that many new channels of distribution for Ideas will open up. Television will move from being a medium with fewer than 100 channels to one of tens of thousands. The Internet is a crude forerunner of a technology which will enable anyone to put high quality video onto their PC and deliver anywhere in the world. As Internet sites multiply and search engines improve everyone with access to a PC will be able to unearth information previously only known to the tiny minority of political or business leaders with all the resources of the state of a multina-

We have hardly begun to think through the social consequences of a world where knowledge will become both infinitely available and virtually free. Of course some of us will be lazy and prefer to watch Titanic than work out what is happening in Macedonia. More worrying, some of us may believe that the Hollywood version of history is the right one, or that the values and behaviour of movie stars should be a guide to us all, But if knowledge is available and we are adequately educated to access and use it, it is our own fault if we allow global media groups to force-feed us with pre-di-

New Labour is old at heart. It's no place for the young



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WAYNE HEMINGWAY

Youth culture is full of new ideas for reshaping Britain. But the Blairites are deaf to innovation

AS THE phrases "Re-branding Britain" and "Cool Britannia" become consigned to the scrap heap of spent jargon, I'm haunted by the sense of a chance wasted.

Welfare to work, tuition fees and failure to attack the creativity brain drain of young designers away from Britain have led me to speak out against a Government which was voted in with fervour by a disillusioned youth and has now turned against those same young people with a cynicism we had come to expect only from the Tories. It wouldn't seem so bad if

Tony Blair and the rest of his smug ensemble didn't keep telling us how fashionable and connected to Young Britain a step in the right direction. But

they feel. But they milk their association with youth culture, so we have every right to test their credentials.

The Conservative government gifts to British culture - the Criminal Justice Bill, Clause 28 and the Poll Tax made a Labour victory inevitable. But within their first year in office, New Labour is in danger of causing more damage than 20 years of a Conservative government. Mr Blair may genuinely believe that British youth culture is a valuable national resource, but rather than use this for misguided photo opportunities, he needs people around him who are intimate with it its needs and its potential.

The Creative Task Force is

getting business people together on an irregular basis is a poor substitute for representing the millions of young penple aged 14 to 31 who will form the youth vote at the next election. We need them active

in politics on a daily basis. Immediately after the election in May, Labour spin doctors called the press to photo graph young MP's and sent come low-paid assistants in the them round the TV circuit in the vain hope that we would identify with them. I have to tell Alastair Campbell that these 24 year olds were better than a dose of HRT for this 37 year old. We now have politicians with full heads of hair, flat stomachs - hnt with thoroughly middle aged values.

The alternative nation does

not have a voice. Youth culture I watch the proceedings, I see is full of hright, free thinking dull people making middleand creative individuals who are aware that the entry route to politics is not there for them. Local party selection committees are unreceptive to new ideas. Full of jaded party members, they brook no challenge

to their prejudices. So bright young people bemusic, tv and creative arts industries. All this energy and ability to challenge accepted values, nutdated ways of thinking and make a real difference to the lives of young people could be harnessed. But then again, what would be the point? It would only be quashed again once they reached in the stuffy Houses of Parliament. When

aged, debating society digs at one another. A lot of them are the very twenty and thirtysomethings the spin-doctors sold to us as Young Britain. They hlend seamlessly into the stale world of Westminster.

Tony Blair, you have told us you love Blur and Oasis, you have told us that you believe British creativity is valued by this government. Go on then: create a party in which youthful free thinking can thrive. The last thing I or any of my contemporaries wanted to do when we went to college was to become an MP. When we see what you are doing in taking away our right to free education, perhaps



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have told me that Sunday's march of countryside supporters on London has had a dramatic effect on the Prime Minister. He was truly upset by the number of people openly hostile to him. "He wants to be loved by everyone," my source said. "We've starting calling him the 'Andrex puppy' behind his back."

FORTUNATELY, the Prime Minister did not attend the first Commons meeting of Friends of Oxford University Labour Club on Monday night. He might have overhead an exchange which would have left him doubly depressed. Austin Mitchell gave a speech to this group founded to bring students together with "like-minded ageing lefties from other periods at Oxford". One of the grey-harred members sidled up to two very attractive female undergraduates. "So are you both Blairites? Michael Cole was to have governor and there last week." He continued: "I Egyptian mega shopkeeper was shown is a nice guy."

Would you suck Tony's toes?" The graduates. So are you both Blairites?

SOURCES in the Cabinet Office answer was less than kind. "I wouldn't give him the time of day," said one. But the news is not all bad. According to Jonathan Auburn of Magdalen College, "The university Labour Club is split fairly evenly between pro-Blair students and other students with more left-wing views. Very few are actually anti-Blair."

IT'S AN open secret that the investigative journalist Tom Bower is hard at work on a biography of Mohamed Al Fayed, although no publisher bas yet been announced. Following the Harrods pharoah's "voluntary" visit to a police station on Monday, I asked Bower -- the author of superb biographies about Robert Maxwell and Tiny Rowland - what he made of the latest twist in the Fayed tale. "If's a great story for my book," Bower said. Michael Cole was to have got out of a "Mohamed Al Payed" character. The script was fine. I'm sure that Al Payed



think the legal case will come down to the two sides arguing over whether there were any jewels in the safe deposit box or not."

BACK in the comparatively real world of showbusiness, Pandora has learned that several scenes in the television docudrama being filmed about a great story in any one how elever Princess Diana and Dodi will feature to do any research as I thought the

jor problem, however, was finding an actor skilful enough to play the demanding role of dynamic, self-made, unusually articulate Al Fayed. But the director is confident that she has found just the right man: Al Fiorentini. whose TV.

theatre and film credits include Agatha Christie. Barefoot In the Park and the newly released Act of Will. What special preparation did Fiorentini undertake toplay Fayed,

including the scene in which he speaks tenderly to his son and assures him that "you got balls". Pandora caught up with Fiorentini and he said, "I didn't have

the script and he approved it. The ma- THE latest issue of 'Campaign' brings news of comic Harry Enfield's long-term deal to advertise "adult" Hula Hoops on television. This came as a surprise at the Groucho Club, as Enfield is a strong supporter of the boycott by Equity, the actors' union, of the advertising industry's television commercials.

> THE smokers' rights group Forest is opening a new office next week with an advanced air filtration system. To hype this gala event they've sent Pandora an invitation with a small sample bottle containing, says its label, the FRESHEST air in Britain ... possibly!" Very cute, but somewhat offputting as this type of bottle is usually handed out by doctors' surgeries to take a "sample" of a far less agreeable nature, one that definitely fails to hring "fresh air" to mind. Time for a new wheeze, Forest folks?

> > Pandora

BUSINESS & CITY EDITOR, JEREMY WARNER NEWS DESK: 0171-293 2636 FAX: 0171-293 2098 E-MAIL: INDYBUSINESS@INDEPENDENT.CO.UK FINANCIAL JOURNAL OF THE YEAR

EMI non-execs blocked Fifield from top job

By Michael Harrison and Nigel Cope

A REARGUARD action by EMI's nnn-executive directors prevented Jim Fifield, the £7ma-year head of its music division. from succeeding Sir Colin Southgate as chief executive, it emerged yesterday.

Mr Fifield is understood to bave been the favoured candidate among executive directors to take over the tnp inb when Sir Colin moves into the role of non-executive chairman. But the powerful group of independent directors on the EMI board blocked the move.

It has also been confirmed that Sir Colin's decision to stay on as executive chairman is a short-term measure and that a successor as chief executive is expected to be named by June or July. The group is looking internally and externally for a new chief executive.

The group of non-executives who blocked Mr Fifield's promotion consists of Sir Peter Walters, non-executive chairman of SmithKline Beecham; Eric Nicoli, chief executive of United Biscuits; Sir Graham Day, former chairman of Rover, British Aerospace and Power-Gen; Hugh Jenkins, formerly of the Prudential; and Dr Harald Einsmann, an executive director of Proctor and Gamble.

Although it had been sug-

balked at the salary being demanded by Mr Fifield, senior internal sources rejected this.

"It wasn't so personal as that. The board decided it wanted someone with a wider scope and a broader menu of skills who had financial abilities required but also the strategic vision to see where the group has come from, where it is going and the technologies that will drive it," nne insider said.

Suggestions that Mr Fifield's prospects of seizing the top job had been undermined by his closeness to Ken Berry, the president of EMI Recorded Music, were also discounted.

The Bel Air-based Mr Berry and his wife, Nancy, have been subject to unflattering coverage of their lifestyles and the powcr that the dun now wield within the EMI empire.

But one senior source dismissed reports that Sir Colin and the board were unhappy with Mr Berry as "borseshit". He added; The board and Sir Colin believe Berry is doing what he is paid for and doing it well."

Stories about his wife's rock'n'roll lifestyle, including late-night parties at fashionable Los Angeles and New York clubs, and Mrs Berry's penchant for attending meetings barefooted and in sbort skirts, were dismissed as "a nasty little

City analysts have become concerned about what they perceive to be a power vacuum beneath Sir Colin Southgate at EMI. With Mr Fifield set to leave when his contract runs out next year and Ken Berry ruled

out for the top job, there are no other credible internal candidates for the position of chief executive. An external search will take longer, leaving Sir Colin to fulfil his dual roles as chairman of EMI and head of the Royal Opera House. EMI shares have performed

dismally since it was demerged from the Thorn rental husiness in summer 1996. The shares have lost more than 25 per cent of their value since then. However, the stock bounced 22p to 540p yesterday as bid rumours resurfaced. Analysts say a predator could take advantage of EMI's management malaise and use it as an opportunity to strike. Seagram, Disney and Bertelsmann, the German music group, have all been mentioned as possible bidders.

EMI is set to become a more focused music group following its Waterstone's deal with WH Smith last week, Its HMV music and Dillons books businesses will be grouped into a separate company with Waterstone's. The new company, HMV Media, will be treated as an associate in EMT's accounts and floated within two years.



Under attack: Jon Foulds, chairman, and chief executive Mike Blackburn announcing Halifax's first results since going public, and their plans Photograph: John Voos

Halifax £lbn share buyback brings strategy under fire

By Andrew Verity

HALIFAX, the former building society, was attacked yesterday for having a "muddled" corporate strategy after it confirmed that it would spend £1hn on a share buyback but left the City confused about its acquisition

Announcing its first results since becoming a public comparry last year, the bank pledged to spend one-quarter of its £4bn surplus on buying back shares over the next 12 months.

The move will disappoint its four million policyholders wbo bave bung on to windfall shares in the hope of a special dividend. It was widely hoped the new bank would use an upfront dividend payment to give shareholders a second windfall of mnre than £100 each.

Inn Foulds, chairman of Halifax, said: "We did look at all options and concluded that the share buy-back program was the right one." It added that it would be "in and out of the market" for its own shares over the next year, if and when the price was right to enhance value for remaining sharebolders.

Mr Foulds said Halifax was still looking to make an acquisition but said it could not see value in a UK purchase. But he also held out the prospect of an expansion into Europe.

Taking a long-term view, it probably will be right for the Halifax at some stage to move into Europe but it has got to be at a sensible price and it has got to be on a worthwhile scale. If the right opportunity came up

in the short term then we would certainly be interested. But it may out. This is a very long game of chess."

The huyback was announced as Halifax revealed that its share of the mortgage market, measured as net lending, had shrunk from 11 per cent in 1996 to just 6 per cent last year. Meanwhile, savers withdrew £615m from deposit accounts - against an inflow of £2.318m the year before.

Mike Blackhurn, chief executive, said that both figures bud been affected by the conversion last summer. Many mortgage holders had redeemed their loans after waiting months or even years to pick up windfall shares.

However, he admitted that market conditions were tough because rival lenders were slashing their margins. The society would spend 20 per cent mnre this year na special deals for first-time buyers.

City analysts reacted with disappointment to the buyback plans and bemoaned the apparent lack of a clear corporate strategy.

Gcoff Miller, an analyst at Wise Speke, the private client stockbroker, said: "The whole strategic message was garbled and the message coming through is not a positive one. The company really needs to do something to demonstrate that they are able to benefit from the fact that a third of the UK population has had an account. The Halifax has a strategy, but it has yet to put any of it into practice." Outlook, page 21

Warning ir

£4.45bn bid tips see-saw battle for Energy Group to Texas Utilities

By Michael Harrison

THE extraordinary battle for . control of Energy Group, owner of Eastern Electricity, seesawed back in favour of Texas Utilities yesterday after it raised its offer to £4.45bo and snapped up a 14 per cent stake in the company

The S40p-a-share offer trumped the 820p bid announced on Monday evening by its US rival, PacifiCorp. Last night the Oregon-hased PacifiCorp was deciding whether to stake. Under Takeover Panel come back with yet another increased offer.

Texas, which threw its bat into the ring with an opening bid of 810p at the start of the week, said that it bad acquired 72.56 million Energy Group shares at the new bid price of 840p representing 13.9 per cent of the company.

PacifiCorp, which began the auction last June for Energy Group with a bid worth 695p, has built up a 10.5 per cent rules, the two groups cannot raise their stakes above 15 per

Although Texas has tabled the highest price, it does not have regulatory clearance for its bid, unlike PacifiCorp which was cleared by the Monopolies and Mergers Commission in December.

An MMC referral of the Texas bid is thought unlikely. But it remains an outside possibility, particularly if the Pres-

ident of the Board of Trade, Margaret Beckett, decides that the funding of the bid could put undue strain on its finances and threaten Eastern's ability to

fund its operations. Eastern is the biggest regional electricity company in ritain with three million customers. It is also the fourth largest electricity generalor and one of the biggest independent players in the liberalised gas market.

Erle Nye, the Texas chair-

man, is due to see the Office of Fair Trading and Department of Trade and Industry officials this week to argue his case for avoiding a referral. Earlier this week Texas said it believed it would get regulatory approvals on both sides of the Atlantic within the two month bid

timetable. Texas has arranged a \$10.3hn (£6.24bn) debt facility to fund the bid which, if successful, would initially create a group with debts of \$18bn.

Disposals and the issue of new equity would reduce this to \$14bn, giving it a conventional debt-equity gearing of 155

PacifiCorp's initial £3.7bo bid last June was referred to the Monopolies and Mergers Commission in August on the grounds that the regulatory system might not have been sufficient to police the merged company adequately. The Office of Fair Trading and the electricity regulator Professor

By the time the PIA visited

the company in January 1997.

two years after it was asked to

look at the scandal, Britannic

had not identified which poli-

cyholders needed urgent at-

tention. The PIA said its

fundamental failures were af-

Stepheo Littlechild both came down against a referral.

The bid was subsequently cleared by the MMC in December without any conditions in addition to those afready recommended by the OFT to ring-fence Eastern.

One Whitehall som "If a case raises the same issues as an earlier one then in general you would be mad to go through the MMC all over again. But no two cases are ever

bolders with the highest stan-

dards of service. We do ac-

knowledge that in the period

prior to January 1997 we did not

bave everything in place and we

did not carry out the review in

accordance with the PIA's stan-

dards." Asked wby there were

inadequacies in the level of re-

sources devoted to the mis-

selling review, Mr Shaw said:

We have always held this as a

high priority. The extent to

which we can actually allocate

resources depends on the rate

mitted Britannic had believed

it would be appropriate to fo-

cus nn cases where it was most

PIA had demanded. The fine is

a joint record; matched naly by

that given to London & Man-

chester, a rival home-service

company, reinforcing the im-

pression that door-to-door in-

surers were the worst culprits in

the mis-selling scandal.

But this was not what the

likely redress would be due.

In mitigation, the PIA ad-

of progress being made." -

SmithKline executives go on charm offensive

By Andrew Yates

SMITHKLINE Beecham yesterday launched a bectic round of meetings with its institubonal shareholders designed tn ward off a hostile bid from Glaxo Wellcome after merger talks between the two drugs giants collapsed last week.

SmithKline is telling shareholders over the next few days that it has a strong future and can survive as an independent group. It is also stressing that its top executives are united in their opposition for a deal with Glaxo. Institutions have also been assured that the board is right behind Jan Leschly, the group's chief executive, over his decision to call off the merger talks after what he deemed to be a betrayal by Glaxo when it tried to change the original

terms of the deal. Industry sources suggest SmithKline is confident it can enlist enough support from fund managers to deter a takeover by Glaxo. However, a number of shareholders remain disgruntled that they have lost out on more than £15bn of value that would have been created by a merger and speculation in the City is mounting that Glaxo will launch a hostile hid within the next few days.

Mr Leschly and his deputy, Jean-Pierre Garnier, are being accompanied by the non-executive chairman, Sir Peter Walters, no SmithKline's charm offensive, which will be used to try to restore the group's battered reputation after it called nff two mergers within a month.

National Power shares feel the chill of electricity price cuts

By Michael Harrison

SHARES in the electricity generaturs fell sharply yesterday after National Power warned that new lower-priced contracts signed with the regional supply companies would wipe £130m off its profits in the coming financial year. The company said that it

would be passing through £230m of cost savings, nf which £100m resulted from lower coal prices, worth a total of £12 off domestic bills and £65 off the annual charge for a small

The reduction in hills has already been factored into the new two-year supply price controls which come into effect in April and will save the average household £24. Generation costs account for 56 per cent of domestic electricity bills.

National Power said that the price reductions stemmed from increased competition in the generating market and harder

STOCK MARKETS

FTSE 100

hargains struck by the regional electricity companies (Recs) as they prepared for the opening up of the domestic market.

Shares in the group fell 31p to 587p, while PowerGen shares ended the day 29p low-National Power said that it had secured contracts covering

all its expected generating output next year. Contracts with the Recs for domestic supplies account for about 70 per cent of its output and these have been signed up at a price of about 3p a unit. The impact of the price

cuts will be to lower National Power's profits from about £740m in the current year to £610m in 1998-99. A spokesman said the prices it had ohtained were the best

The five-year "back to back" coal contracts between the generators and the regional electricity companies end this April. Under the contracts, National

Nikkei

Power, PowerGen and Eastern have been able to pass on the costs of having to huy higherpriced British coal to the domestic market. In the current year, the average price paid by the generators is 148p a gigajoule. Next year it will fall to un-

All three generators are taking much less coal next year from RJB Mining, Britain's biggest coal producer, prompting fears that as many as eight pits will have to close with the loss of 5,000 jobs. National Power has contracted to buy 8 million tons against the 10 million tons it bought in 1997-98. PowerGen has only contracted to buy 3 million tons.

A deal was brokered befinre last Christmas by the Paymaster General, Geoffrey Rohinson, giving the threatened pits a three-month lifeline when contracts run out in April. But there is no sign yet of a solution that will safeguard the pits in the longer term.



PIA gives record £525,000 mis-selling fine to Britannic By Andrew Verity BRITANNIC Assurance was yesterday given a withering public reprimand and a record fine of £525,000 over failures in compensating investors who lost thousands of pounds each because of pension mis-selling. The Personal Investment Authority also billed it for legal costs of £125,000 after it battled

Meanwhile, the industry that perform poorly, including an increased compensation payment of £50 for customers who have their electricity cut off for more than 24 hours.

Stephen Littlechild: Bigger regulatur, Professor Stepben Littlechild, announced higger penalties for supply companies

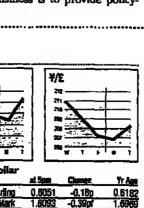
minders were "incomplete and Outlook, page 21 | ad boc", the regulator said.

for a year to persuade the insurer to rectify fundamental

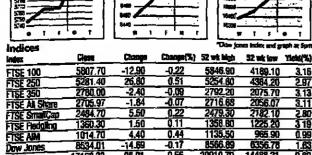
failings in its efforts to compensate victims of mis-selling. Britannic, a home-service insurer which collects premiums door-to-door, failed even to send vital questionnaires to possible mis-selling victims on time. They were supposed to have been sent, returned and dealt with by 31 December 1996. Despite knowing of the regulator's concern, Britannic failed properly to chase policyholders for replies. Its re-

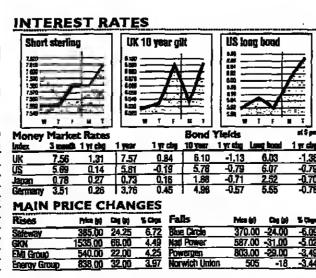
fected by weak planning. It had also dedicated inadequate resources to the review of pensions mis-selling. Britannie "failed to take all reasonable steps to carry out its review of past pension transfer and opt-out business" along the lines demanded by regulators. The company said it was apologising to policyholders, it would compensate 14,500 in-

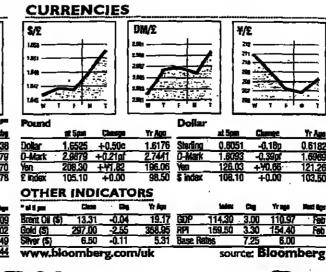
vestors with urgent cases by the end of June at the latest. Brian Shaw, Britannic's chief executive, said; "Wherever it is appropriate we do apologise. In dealing with customers we are indeed apologetic for what has happened. We recognise that the whole credibility of our business is to provide policy-



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Halifax tries gimmicks to claw back loyalty

a sore thumb from the generally flatter- tered. ing list of key statistics paraded by the Halifax yesterday with its first set of full year results as a pic. The former building society's share of net new mortgage lending slumped last year from 11 to just 6 per cent. Halifax's share of the total UK mortgage market, built up over the generations under mutual ownership, is somewhere in

the high teens. Plainly if this poor showing with net new mortgage lending continues for much longer, Halifax's overall position in the market will begin seriously to erode. What's happening here? Now that the Halifax is a bank, is the public beginning to treat it like one - by shunning it in favour of what remains of the mutual tradition?

For the moment, investors seem to be unperturbed. A sharp fall in net new mortgage lending was common to all the newly converted building societies last year and it was caused largely by the process. of conversion itself. Since mortgage borrowers were entitled to free shares in the converting building societies along with depositors, a backlog of mortgage redemptions built up as members sought to hold no long enough to benefit from the

That backlog broke like a dam the momeot conversino took place, and by the Halifax's own calculation more than two years of normal redemptions and remortgages flow went through the books in the months immediately after the stock market float. If you look at gross new as last year. It is not clear that a compa-

THERE'S one figure that sticks out like says, then market shares are not much alto this extent warrants the heady, growth

But is this the whole story and where has the business gone to? The main benefficiaries certainly appear to have been the remaining mutuals. In part this is also explained by the conversion phenomenon. It obviously makes sense to take out a new mortgage with a mutual when there is some prospect of it one day converting. With the Halifax and other converted societies, the windfall has already been and gone. But it is also to do with the fact that the mutuals are on the whole now offering more competitive rates than the converted societies, both to savers and

The Halifax is determined to claw back this loss of market share with a whole new raft of marketing gimmicks, cash back nffers and the like. Other converted societies talk about getting the balance right between profitability and volume; they are prepared to cede volume if the result is enhanced profitability. Bot whichever way you cut it, the mutuals seem to be offering a better deal than the converts. Halifax also has to contend with new, low cost entrants to the market. The only constraint on the growth of the mutuals and the new entrants seems to be in their administrative capacity to deal with the influx of new

·Even so, there is every possibility that the market share of the converted building societies will continue to erode sharply, albeit at not quite the same alarming pace lending, ignoring redemptions, Halifax my that has matured in its core business

stock rating of 22 times earnings placed on the Halifax and its like. But then for the time being we are still in the longest running bull market of all time.

THERE HAS been much talk over the last week about how the "architecture of the global financial system" might be reformed to reduce the risks of violent mishap such as the sudden plunge of the Far East into economic crisis. Alan Greenspan, chairman of the US Federal Reserve, started the ball rolling on Friday by saying "the architecture of the international financial system will need to be be thoroughly reviewed and altered as necessary to fit the needs of the new global environment".

Not to be nutdone, the US Treasury Secretary, Robert Rubin, immediately claimed an extensive effort was already under way to overhaul this architecture. Then in weighed Eisuke Sakakībara, a semi of-. ficial Japanese Government spokesman on matters financial to say that many world leaders would be starting to contemplate something along the lines of the Bretton Woods agreement. What's that? Bretton Woods? Whoa there boy! We're beginning to get a bit out of hand here.

There is a world of a difference between Mr Greenspan's measured calls for greater transparency, more effective counterparty surveillance, government regulation, supervision and the like, and the reinstatement of a fixed exchange rate system such as that of Brettoo Woods. Nnthing could be more nut of place today than another Bretton Woods; it would run wholly counter to the highly effective and disciplined way in which the modern and now global capitalist system exposes and punishes underlying economic

So why is Mr Sakakibara, often known in the West as "Mr Yen" because of the effect of his comments on foreign exchange markets, proposing it? It is because Mr Salakibara and many others in the Far East still refuse to see their economic crisis for what it is, the result of bad and corrupt government which attempted disastrously as we have seen - to manipulate the capital markets to their own ends. Everyone wants to find a way of limiting the extremes of behaviour in the capital markets. But Bretton Woods is not the

"Electricity giant cuts £12 off household bills" makes a nice headline for an industry that is still hardly flavour of the month either with the Government or the con-

But the reality behind yesterday's announcement that National Power has decided to pass through £230m of cost savings to domestic customers, is somewhat

The price cuts NatPower proudly annonnced are already in the pipeline. They make up part of the £24 reductioo in the average bill that the electricity regulator Professor Stephen Littlechild forced through last October.

What NatPower's announcement re-

ally demonstrates is just what a topsy-tury. world it has become when the price of qual supplied to its power stations can tumble by more than 20 per cent and yet the net effect can be to wipe £130m off its hottom line.

Scarce surprise that its share price gut a nasty shock along with PowerGen's. Eastern, the third biggest player in the fossilfuel generating market, would also have felt the heat were its shares not so fired up by the bid hattle currently being waged by a pair of US utilities.

The fact is that the demise of the cosy "back tn back" deals whereby the generators bought over-priced British eval and then simply passed the costs onto the consumer via the regional electricity companies spells trouble not just for RJB Mining. The hig three suddenly find them-

selves squeezed between a government determined to do something to help the coal industry and a bunch of customers who are finally waking up to the fact that as their markets open to competition, they will have to buy supplies more competitively too.

The net result is that profit margins in the electricity business are likely to migrate away from the generators and towards the supply end of the business. It will not be a big migration but it will be enough to explain why PowerGen's Ed Wallis is so keen in buy a Rec.

None of this, uf course, will deter Texas or PacifiCorp from paying a ruinnus price for Energy Group. But if the only people who get hurned are shareholders in Dallas and Portland, then who's

British Borneo admits it quit Cuba amid pressure from the US government

By Terry Macalister

BRITISH BORNEO, the independent oil company, yesterday revealed it pulled nut of Cuba amid political pressure from the US State Department. The company, which has Sir Bob Reid, former British Rail boss, as a oon-executive director, is being investigated by State Department officials alongside Premier Oil and Canada's Genoil.

They are under review over possible breaches of the Helms Burton embargo legislation. under which travel visas to the US can be revoked. Steve Holliday, international director of British Bornen, said it left Cuba late last year. Asked if politics was a reasons, he said: It would be naive to say it was nnt a consideration."

But he said a range of issues well this year.

were taken into account. British 21 and drilled a well near the producing Pina field. It also did seismic tests looking for oil on block 11 but would not comment on whether there were commercial opportunities.

Mr Holliday said State Department officials asked his company to supply information about their Cuban activities. He added: "We do not expect to hear any more from them."

Charles Jamieson, chief executive of Premier, confirmed he too had been asked to give details of activities in Cuba. "We have spoken to State department officials on questions of clarification." Premier also shot seismic tests no two blocks of land where it has been granted explaration liceoces. It planned to start drilling a first

Borneo held a licence for block had taken legal advice before were going on with British starting work in Cuba. "As far as we know the land we are operating nn is now owned by. Americans." Premier is the moment. A long process of inoriginal licence holder of blocks vestigation is carried out before 21 and 18. In the past it spoke a company and its executives of "good prospectivity" for are formally informed they larger oil-bearing structures, but

they were located at deep lev-

els, making them harder to

The Helms Burton Act was introduced in March 1996. It was implemented by Congress following the shooting down of a US aircraft nff the island. Under Title Fnur of Helms Burton, US visas can be revoked for any executives, their family or shareholders of any company found to be "trafficking in properties confiscated from

US citizens or businesses." A spokesman for the State

Mr Jamieson said Premier Department confirmed talks Borneo and Premier and stressed this did not mean the companies were guilty at this have fallen foul of the legisla-

> Even then it is possible for an excluded company to oegotiate a settlement. But the State Department official added: "We try to be careful about who we question, hence the small number of companies being investigated."

Only one company, Sherritt loternational nf Canada, is currectly on the list of embargo-breakers. Two others have either settled with YIS owners or corrected their violations in New Zealand-born Coats Viyella chief is new head of the Post Office



Customers

A NEW Zealand-born businessman was today appointed to be the new chairman of the Post Office. Neville Bain, 57, will succeed Sir Michael Heron when he retires from the top job later this month.

Mr Bain was group chief executive of Coats Viyella until he resigned a year ago and before that spent 27 years with Cadbury Schweppes, where he was deputy group chief executive.

Mr Bain is currently chairman of Hogg Robinson and a nonexecutive director of Safeway, Scottish & **Newcastle and Gartmore** Scotland Investment

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Ailing Mulberry issues third profit warning in 10 weeks

City Correspondent

MULBERRY, the troubled luxury goods group, delivered more bad news for investors yesterday wheo it issued its third profits warning in 10 weeks. Shares lost 35 per cent of their value to close at 37p, their lowest level since the company was floated on the Alternative Investment Market in May 1996. The shares were then priced at 153p.

Analysis questioned yesterday whether Mulberry, valued at £8m, had a future as an independent company. "Its best protection is that the founder owns 60 per cent of the shares," one analyst said.

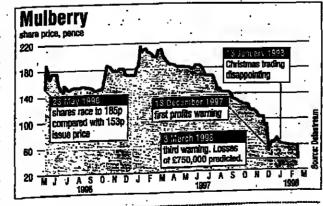
Mulberry said its profits for the year to 31 March would now fall "significantly short of expectations", due to the continucd strength of sterling. It now expects tu produce a pre-tax loss of £750,000 "at best" after exceptional costs of £600,000. It is cutting 28 jobs across the

group at a cost of £200,000, in addition to £400,000 redundancy costs previously announced. . All small leather goods production will be shifted from Britain to Spain and Italy. The company has pledged to

maintain the dividend. Roger

Saul chairman and founder. and finance director Godfrey Davis have waived their right to

their £71,000 divided payment. "It is bitterly disappointing tn announce this news," Mr Saul said. "We ... are being punished by the strength of sterling. Compared to last year, for every £10m of export sales, we have lost £2.5m."



Spring Ram turns losses

dend payment for three years.

sales up 17 per cent.

ago as company doctor to resuscitate Spring Ram, said: "1997 has seen the group moving on to increasingly solid foundations." Pre-tax profits of £0.5m in the

The new chief executive is Steve Brown, former head of Spring Ram's core kitchen divi-

ing profit of £0.9m nn a similar level of turnover. Costs have been severely pruned with the closure of one nf its two factories in Scunthorpe. The bathrooms and

Mr Regan said the turnaround has taken longer than he expected. He says he will be around for at least this year and maybe next: "We have a strong recovery plan in progress, I want to delivery of it."

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EMU warning mars City trading records By Diane Colye

Leanomics Editor TRADING in the City of London set new records last year, but a report trumpeting its success in international markets warned that staying outside the single European currency could pose a threat to some ar-

ens of business. Turnover reached fresh highs in three key financial nurkets, according to a report from British Invisibles, the hady which promotes financial. and other services. For the first time, dealing in

cent in £1,443bn last year. Here London has a 62 per cent share of glubal business.

United Kingdom equities exceeded a trillion pounds, rising 36 per cent compared with 1996 to £1,013bn. Although London is only the third biggest stock market for domestic equities, behind New York and Tokyo, it is the world's biggest relative to the size of the economy.

International trading in eurobonds climbed 45 per cent to £8,450bn, with seven-tenths of this business based in London. And cross-border trading in foreign equines rose by 39 per doo's dominant position, and said some City activities could beoefit from the start of EMU even with Britain staying outside. For example, it argued that the London Stock Exchange could benefit from an upsurge in European equities trading across borders. The report warned of a par-

The report acclaimed Lon-

ticular threat to trading in EMU-area bonds, where the City's positinn is currently strong. Multinationals might see merit in switching their business to banks in an EMU country, it said.

into a profit By Terry Macalister

SPRING RAM, the former black sheep of the stock market, yesterday came leaping back to health with its profits and divi-

A new chief executive has been appointed from inside the company and Spring Ram said New Year trading lonked good, with the first eight weeks of 1998 showing like-for-like.

The chairman, Roger Regan, who was brought in three years

12 months to 3 January compared with a loss of £36.8m last time. A dividend of 0.1p has been paid, the first payout since 1994.

sion. His promotion has been made on the back of a significant financial clean-up in kitchens. This division moved from an operating loss of £1.9m in the first half of 1997 to an operat-

acrylics side of the group's business also performed strongly.

THE INVESTMENT COLUMN

EDITED BY ANDREW YATES

Irish luck holds for CRH abroad

THE IRISH are famous for having a good time wherever they find themselves around the world. This trait has been typified by CRH, the country's largest building group, over the last few years. Based in Dublin, its push into international markets has been a great success, so almost three-quarters of its trading profits now come from abroad.

The big test last year was North America. Even though the United States economy enjoyed its sixth year of expansion in 1997, the construction industry has seen relatively modest growth of around 3 per cent per annum. And CRH wanted a strong performance there to show it could absorb its biggest acquisition yet, the \$3.29m (£238m) purchase in 1996 of Tilcon from BTR. plus the subsequent takeover of Allied Building Products

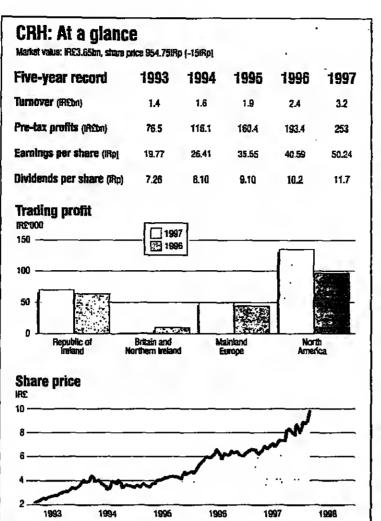
The luck of the Irish has not deserted the group. Profits across the Atlantic jumped 40 per cent to IR£135.0m. in 1997. That storming performance helped group pre-tax profits to roar ahead 26 per cent to IR£253m on turnover up 27 per cent at IR£3.2bn.

Despite acquiring a slew of businesses from Tilcon to Caneras Cerro Negro in Argentina in the last two years. CRH still has an appetite for more. Gearing is just 35 per cent and interest cover a very comfortable 8.7 times. And it has five teams at work in North America alone looking for potential acquisitions. CRH is a significant generator of cash so the balance

Chief executive Don Godson, who now has 20,000 employees, is by nature cautious. "We look to positive growth in all our regions in 1998, although probably at a slightly slower pace than a hecuc 1997," he said yesterday. That said, "hertic" sums up a company that has **Drovincial hotels** been buying at companies at a furious rate and at the same time selling some smaller assets it deems peripheral. THISTLE HOTELS is a prime exam-

are currently being reorganised along market in October 1996, it has proved the line of the product-based structure a huge disappointment. Not only did that has worked so well in the US. That it commit the cardinal sin for a newly should help France and Germany quoted group by consistently missing anwhere the building sector has been alysts' profit forecasts, but it has construggling.

The shares slipped IR15p to sector. IR954.75p yesterday. Analysis believe Robert Peel, the group's embattled chief CRH will come up with pre-tax prof- executive, paid the penalty by getting its of IRE279m this year, which would the boot last autumn. Although he can



does not look cheap, hut as long as the US economy does not suddenly take sheet is well positioned for expansion. a nose-dive the rating seems justified for this well-managed group.

Source: Datastream

Thistle axes 30

CRH is not likely to rest on its laurels. ple of how not to float on the stock mar-For a start, the European operations ket. Ever since the group came to the timued to lag behind its peers in the hotel

put it on a future multiple of 17.3. That bardly grumble at a £700,000 pay-off.

With Mr Peel out of the way, Thistle has decided to take the sword to its botel estate. Thirty provincial hotels are to go. with the £100m or so proceeds pumped back into its London four-star botel estate. The group has also launched a shake up of its botel management team and a long-overdue upgrade of the purchasing. And on costs, Partoo is degroup's information technology systems. And another £50m will be spent this year sprucing up its tired hotels. These are all sensible moves and there is plenty of scope to drive room rates forward by concentrating on the corporate market rather than tourists. After all, the only advantage of under

calm investors' frayed nerves. The City's concerns were demonstrated clearly yesterday when the ance the sbares, on a forward earnings shares fell 9p to 181.5p even though multiple of just 11, look cheap.

performing peers for the last few years

is it gives greater potential to improve

have to start showing it can move room

than it has demonstrated in the past to

Thistle announced a 34 per cent rise in pre-tax profits to £80.6m in 1997. However, the hotel market is likely to remain buoyant for the foreseeable future, and analysts forecast current year profits of around £95m-£96m, putting the shares on a prospective p/e ratio of 14.

It is too early to say if Thistle has turned the corner hut at least it appears to be moving in the right direction and a new chief executive should be appointed imminently. Fairly priced.

Partco shares undervalued

YOU HAVE to feel for Partco. Reporting a 112 per cent increase in preexceptional profits to £28.5m yesterday. the car-parts distributor could reasonably have hoped for an upbeat response. In fact, the shares struggled up just 4p to 329.5p. In the past year, they have gone nowhere.

The City's scepticism is easy to justify. Partoo's growth is largely down to acquisitions - primarily Dana Distrib-ution Europe, the distributor it bought for £103m a year ago. Even worse, those acquisitions have been funded by paper: in the past 18 months, Partco has tapped its shareholders for £111m through two large rights issues. Given that like-for-like sales growth across the group was just 2.5 per cent, investors are nervous that the breakneck expansion is not scrually creating much value.

In fact, this is unfair. The main distribution husiness managed 5 per cent growth - ahead of the market as a whole. But the real rationale for the acquisitions is cost savings. Efficiency is improved by pushing more parts through its established distribution network. Larger volumes also mean cheaper livering. Yesterday, it raised its estimate of the synergies from the Dana acquisition by £2m to £5m-£6m. Most of those. will flow through next year.

That should be good news for margins, which rose by almost a full percentage point to 7.4 per cent last year, but still lag behind those of Finelist, Partco's closest competitor. Long term, the company aims for a return on sales earnings in the future. But Thistle will of about 10 per cent.

Although Partco was being coy yields forward much more quickly about acquisitions yesterday, the feeling is that the company will steer clear of large paper-funded deals for the next year or so. With that reassur-

PEOPLE & BUSINESS

JOHN WILLCOCK



EVERY schoolboy knows that a business wanting to call itself a bank has to get permission from the Bank of England first. So Colin Forsyth, "Governor" of The Sandwich Bank & Crust Company, found himself writing to Eddle George to get the go-ahead for his refreshments firm.

Mr Forsyth, writing from his palatial head office at 16 Market Square, Bicester, Oxfordshire, starts off: "As the fellow Governor of a central bank - moreover, one recently freed from political encumbrance - you will doubtless sympathise with me in my ongoing struggle against the dead hand of hureaucracy....

"In short, it seems that I bave to ask clearance from you before I can operate my modest sandwich husiness under its present

I am happy to say that Steady Eddie granted Mr Forsyth's wish, although the sandwich business will not be allowed to take deposits or trade in derivatives.

Incidentally, Mr Forsyth refers to his satisfied customers as "The Fed". Will Alan Greenspan bave to be informed?

The press office at Howard Davies's fledgling Financial Services Authority (FSA) is finally beginning to take shape at Canary Wharf. One spokesman, Peter Parker, has managed to comhine his new role with publishing a book this week, In the Shadow of Sharpeville; Apartheid and Criminal Justice.

Mr Parker wrote the book with his wife Joyce Mokhesi-Parker, from whom he is currently separated. Mrs Mokhesi-Parker's brother was one of six people arrested and tried after the Sharpeville riots in South Africa in September 1984, charged with the murder of the Mayor of Sharpeville.

The book, published by Macmillan, is based on letters from the Sharpeville Six, who were sentenced to death and only reprieved 18 hours before they were due to be hanged.

Betty Powell, a former spokeswoman for the SIB, who has been beloing out at the FSA press office, said yesterday that they were all very proud of Mr Parker's achievement and had presented him with a bottle of champagne.

Footy-mania is definitely getting out of hand.

A City spin doctor was trying to huy a Manchester United tie to present to a business contact this week, and told me yesterday that the club had a three-week waiting list for the dratted things.

" MI steps

Luckily, Soccer Scene of Carnaby Street came up with the goods. Perhaps we need a Secondary Market in Man U paraphernalia.

The latest edition of The Economist has a feature which pokes fun at books about Asia written before the current financial crisis. Books such as The Voice of Asia: Two Leaders Discuss the Coming Century (1995) by Mahathir Mohamad, the Prime Minister of Malaysia, and Shintaro Ishihara, a Japanese nationalist politician, which predicted that the combined GNP of Asia would exceed that of the US and 3 Europe by 2000.

The Economist has fun with such forecasts. now the Asian Tigers have gone phut. Modestly, it does not mention that The Economist's own editor and one-time Japan correspondent. Bill Emmott, has written three books since 1989, all of which managed to cast doubt on the then fashionable image of Japan as an allconquering threat to western economies.

The last published in 1993, was titled Japanophobia: The Myths of the Invincible Japan, in which Mr Emmott dismissed the threat of Japan as "an hysterical canard".

BBA Group, the engineering business, has appointed two high-profile non-executive directors. David Rough, a director of Legal & General and Richard Stillwell, executive vice president, industrial specialties at ICt.

Mr Rough has spent a quarter of a century at the centre of the City's fund management community, while there is not much that Mr Stillwell doesn't know about speciality chemicals and international marketing.

Incidentally, how does Vanni Treves find time to be chairman of BBA Group, senior partner of City law firm Macfarlanes, head of Channel Four and chairman of two other companies, as well as advisor to Richard Branson. all at the same time? He tells me on the phone: "It's all down to the art of delegation and mutual support - and I've got three partners bere in my office all nodding their heads."

In an effort to show our European partners that British husiness is ready for the curo, despite the UK not being in the "first wave" of currency barmonisation, the CBI has sent a group of representatives to Brussels via Eurostar. The three-day mission, which embarked yesterday, is led by CBI London chairman Michael Frye and includes London Minister Nick Raynsfird.

And to cap it all, the CBI has taken a steel band to play in the main square of Brussels. Should wake up the Eurocrats at the very least,

Simon Weldon has jumped ship from Fidelity International to join Premier Portfolio Managers as the latter's bead of institutional sales. Mr Weldon's brief is to develop contacts with discretionary fund managers and independent financial advisers.

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Olympic Games, Barcelona by the capital of Catalonia is the capital of Catalonia by the capital of Catalonia is the capital of Catalonia by the capital of Catalonia is the capital of Catalonia by the capital of Catalonia is the capital of Catalonia by the capital of Catalonia is the capital of Catalonia by the capital of Catalo



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ly Puerta del Soi. *** Hotel Riena Victoria from £229pp

Built at the turn of the century and situated in the heart of Old Madrid in the Plaza Sant'Ana, the Riena Victoria is very conveniently placed for the Prado museum and the main shopping area and close to many of Madrid's best restaurants. £2 supp pppn for Mon - Thu arrivals

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Barcelona

The wonderful Modernist architecture of Gaudi and others make every street a visual treat and in addition, there are many more places to visit than you will find in any other second city.

Madrid The capital and geographical of Tolede, Avila and Segovia

from the excellent shopping and night life, Madrid's main attraction is its outstanding art galleries. These include the Prado, the Reina Sofia, together they make nue of the finest collections in the world. The beautiful medieval cities heart of Spain, Madrid is are all within 90 minutes of a lively, booming city that is Madrid

ideal for a short break. Apart

Delphi shares crash by 15%

By Peter Thal Larsen

INVESTORS were yesterday reminded of the dangers of investing in information technology stocks when Delphi, the IT Another observer said the figrecruitment and services company, reported disappointing results after apparently losing control of its US subsidiary.

Shares in Delphi crashed 124p - or 15 per cent - to 703.5p after the company reported pre-tax profits of £14.1 m - well below analysts' expectations of £15.5m.

Tony Reeves, chairman and chief executive, said the shortfall was because US staff did not work as many bours as expected in the final quarter of the year, but were still paid. "Most of our contractors are on the payroll," he said. "But during the final quarter it turned out that many of them were sick or on boliday."

He also admitted that Delphi's management systems had failed by not warning them of the shortfall earlier.

Industry experts were perplexed at the news. "If you

can't produce excellent figures in this market, which is right at its peak, then when can you?" asked Ingrid von Hentschel, IT analyst with Beeson Gregory. ures were "very, very poor".

The problems bave forced Delphi to abandon its plans to carry out a fundraising on Nasdag, the US hi-tech stock market. Last year, the company came under fire from shareholders over plans to raise £35m from US investors. Although the company eventually won permission from its shareholders to go ahead with the listing, it promptly delayed the move until the spring of this

year. Permission for the fundraising expires at the end of April, which means that Delphi will have to ask shareholders for their approval again. Last night, experts said there was "no chance" that would be granted. But Mr Reeves maintained that a Nasdaq listing was important if the company was to be able to offer its US employees a stake in the business.

COMPANY RESULTS Turnover & Pre-tax & Instrument Pres News (F) AS352m (AS304m) AS52m (AS41m) 13.7c (12.3c) nil 30.3m (19.0m) -0.555m (-0.90m) 13.7p (7.22p) 4.3p (3.0p) Chieffan Greus (F) 90.3m (72.4m) 6.06m (5.23m) 18.2p (15.5p) 9.05p (9.0p) Epinia Great (F) CPSH (F) R3.21bn (2.52bn) R253m (202m) R50.2p (42.1p)11.7p 12.9m (12.3m) 28.8p (33.0p) 7.2p Debate Group (F) 1.63tm (828.0m) 43.5p (22.4p) 17.5p (15.0p) Halles (F) · t+ 45.2m (41.5m) 2.03m (1.83m) 9.98p (7.27p) 2.9p (2.4p) Ampet Group (F) 394m (301m) 47.1m (32.0m) 22.2p (18.2p) 4.5p (4.2p) 11.3m (10.6m) 1.5m (1.3m) Linx Printing Face (1) 6.6p (5.4p) 1.6p (1.3p) 10.4m (10.1m) 0.458m (0.162m) 6.09p (2.24p) 1.0p (0.75p) \$ Lytes (I) 3.80 (2.9p) 1.35p (1.20p) 20.8m (18.5m) 3 0m (2.35m) M-H Smar (I) 28.5m (22.8m) 2.0m (2.1m) 8.5p (8.7p) 5.2p (5.0p) Parlet (F) 386m (204m) 21.3m (10.5m) 21.1p (19.3p) 8.7p (8.0p) 40.3m (52.1m) 3.9m (-13.7m) 5.4p (-32.0p) 2.2p (2.0p) 30.0m (24.52m) 3.10m (2.07m) . 23.8p (19.2p) 5.4p (4.5p) tition Newspapers (1) 59.5m (47.3m) 8.9m (6.2m) 30p (29.3p) 6.0p (5.0p) Spring Ham Cerp (F) 232.5m (297.7m) 0.5m (-96.5m) oil (6.2p) 0.1p (nll) 14.5m (17m) 1.34m (0.760m) 6.11p (5.21p) 1.0p (0.6p) 40.5m (43.7m) -2.81m (-3.2m) -5.9p (-7.8p) ni Taiadle Heltels (F) 319.7m (290.3m) 80.6m (60 lm) 12.38p (-7.24p) 4.2p 8.6m (2.44m) 6.241m (-3.4m) 0.84p (-14.0) pi

Decision on Rolls-Royce sale within a month

GRAHAM Morris, chief executive Rolls-Royce Motor Cars, the luxury carmaker owned by Vickers, said vesterday that be expected a decision on the unit's sale to be reached within four weeks. Speaking to journalists at the Geneva motor show, he said that the outlook for Rolls-Royce had "never been better", and said be anticipated a 10 per cent gain in

sales this year. Mr Morris forecast that the new Rolls-Royce Scrapb model would eventually represent 40 per cent of the unit's worldwide sales. Vickers reports its full-year results today.

Millennium jobs bonanza

A RECRUTTMENT campaign worth £500,000 was launched yesterday, spearheaded by the British Institute of Innkerping, to help fill 230,000 new jobs expected to be created over the next five years in pubs, clubs and hotels. The licensed retail industry said 630 jobs would be on offer every week into the millennium, ranging from bar work to catering, managerial and financial posts. A special work-experience day is being organised as well as recruitment roadshows, backed by a £210,000 government grant.

Andersen revenue up 25%

ANDERSEN Consulting shrugged off its hitter dispute with sister organisation Arthur Andersen by reporting a 25 per cent rise in worldwide revenues, to \$6.6hn (£4bn). The Europe, Middle East, Africa and India region achieved the biggest gain - up 31 per cent to \$2.3ha - in the year to 31 December 1997. George Shaheen, worldwide managing partner of the firm, which employs 53,000 people in 47 countries, said the fourth consecutive year of more than 20 per cent growth was a result of sensing and responding to the needs of clients and the dynamics of the marketplace.

Railtrack picks Tarmac

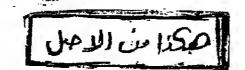
TARMAC, the construction and quarries group, has won a contract from Railtrack worth up to £90m. The contract, for work in East Anglia, was won by Centrac - part of Tarmac Construction Services - and is worth £18m a year for the next three years. An option to extend for two more years would raise the total to £90m. From May, Centrac will renew more than 50 miles of railway track per year in Norfolk, Suffolk. Essex and north London.

UBS analysts recruited

DEUTSCHE Morgan Grenfell, the investment banking arm of Deutsche Bank, has recruited six equity analysts for its European research department in London. All six were previously employed at UBS, the Swiss bank that is making London analysts redundant as part of its merger with SBC. The new recruits are engineering analysts Mark Cusack and Peter Reilly, the number one-rated European media analyst Mark Beilby, transport analysis Charles Donald and Matthew Weston and technology analyst Ross Jobber.

London International Group

THE amount of money that London International Group is investing for a 50 per cent share in a Chinese joint venture company, Qingdao London International Latex Company, is £2.2m not £1.8bn as we reported yesterday.



rafficensster (F)

(F) - Fred (I) - Interim

EMI steps back into the bid spotlight

MARKET REPORT



427

DEREK PAIN

TWO long-term takeover Asda is known to be keen tions of corporate activity coot parcel at the Texas bid 952p on disappointment with 11p) on the escalating valuathe supermarket chain, enjoyed strong runs in a busy session which ended Footsie's four-day winning run.

EMI was given a 22p spin to 540p oo renewed talk of a US strike. There are indications the music group could be power in a bid to press its case. indices, however, were still in vulnerable. It has encountered tough trading, particularly in Asia, which prompted the inevitable profits warning. With boardroom tension evident and the shares under performing in the past year, EMI would struggle to repel a determined assault.

Safeway jumped 24.5p to 385p (after 387p) in busy trading as stories swirled of an Asda strike. Last night only one sell order, 10,000 shares at 390p, was left on the order book against 11 buy trades. But, as with all blue chips, most of the trading was through

candidates were thrust back to swallow Safeway which has among pharmaceuticals with price of 840p a share. into the limelight. EMI, the issued three profits warnings some traders wondering

> Government oppositioo. 23p to 2,670p. However, it has, it is said, been treading the corridors of off at 5,807.7. The supporting gave op 16p at 517p.

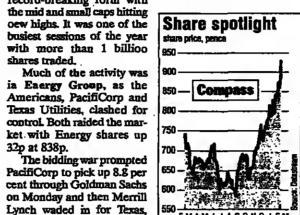
The Asda story could have record-breaking form with been given a push by SBC the mid and small caps hitting Warburg which described Safeway shares as a sell on busiest sessions of the year trading fundamentals but drew with more than 1 billioo attention to the speculation shares traded. which has surrounded the chain since Asda's interest in Energy Group, as the first surfaced. NatWest Securities also contributed by Texas Utilities, clashed for switching its Safeway stance from sell to hold. Asda fell ket with Energy shares up

2.5p to 200p. Another retail story suggested Next could strike at PacifiCorp to pick up 8.8 per Storehouse, up 10.5p to 270.5p. Next gained 2.5p to

32p at 838p.

putting together a 13.9 per

showbiz group, and Safeway, in little more than a year (and whether Glazo Wellcome, off on the blink. What was, in turning cash to shareholders. abon. PizzaKrpress rose 11p many expect another in a few of at 1,648p, is ready to launch effect, a profit warning from a hostile strike at Smithkline National Power left the shares a special dividend which would It has so far held back Beecham, also off 6p, at 738p. from bidding because it fears Zeneca, figures tomorrow, fell trimmed their forecasts. PowerGen fell 29p to 803p in Footsie ended 12.9 points sympathy and ScottishPower



its chosen route, buying its tions put on its up-for-sale Other power shares were shares in the market, for re-There were hopes it would pay 31p off at 587p as analysts give small shareholders a direct cash benefit. It started the a luxury goods group, slumped buy-back by picking 4.6 million 20.5p to 37p following anoth-

shares from Merrill Lynch at

at 1,796p and Norwich Union,

reflecting the failure of any

961.09p. Halifax retreated 25p to Financials were generally weak with Barclays down 34p

> Halifax bid to appear, lost 18p to 505p. Compass, the contract caterer, hardened 40p to 928p peak after gaining a global catering contract for Philips Electronics. Rentokil Initial, the support services group which has been linked with Compass, gained 9.5p to

BTR's rehabilitation continued with a 5.5p gain to 192.5p and Inchespe added

14p to 226p.

TAKING STOCK

Dewar's Scotch whisky oper-

to 806p after an investment

presentatioo at Dresdner

Kleinwort Benson, Mulberry,

Simon, a business support

group, held at 49.5p after

ABN Amro placed a line of

5.75 million shares at 49.5p

ended 17p higher at 224.5p.

Profits were up 47 per cent to

£47.1m despite sterling's

streogth. Merrill Lynch

moved its stance from ocutral

Sherwood International,

Halma, the engineer, rose

an IT group, jumped 82.5p to

690p after producing profits of

6.5p to 113.5p in busy trading.

Fibernet gained 13.5p to 215p

on the Greig Middletoo com-

£3.1m against £2.1m.

Inspec, a chemical group,

er profits warning.

with an institution.

Emerald Energy, seeking oil in Colombia, lost a further 0.5p to 6.75p. The shares have fallen from 10p last month. Chairman Isin Alexander has admitted the Chawina-2 well in Colombia has encountered further delays. But he said: "These are no more than drilling problems. There is nothing seriously wrong". The shares have suffered from the lack of progress in Colombia and Lasmo's intention, announced last week, to sell

its Colombian operations because its discoveries there have not been big enough.

Rage Software, after an unhappy run, is gathering strength. The shares rose ip to 7.25p, a far cry from their 250 peak but more than double the low bit in June. The company is concentrating oo computer games. There are high hopes that one, called Incoming, could be worth approaching £1m this year and there is market talk another game is about to

Reliably Royce

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All you ever

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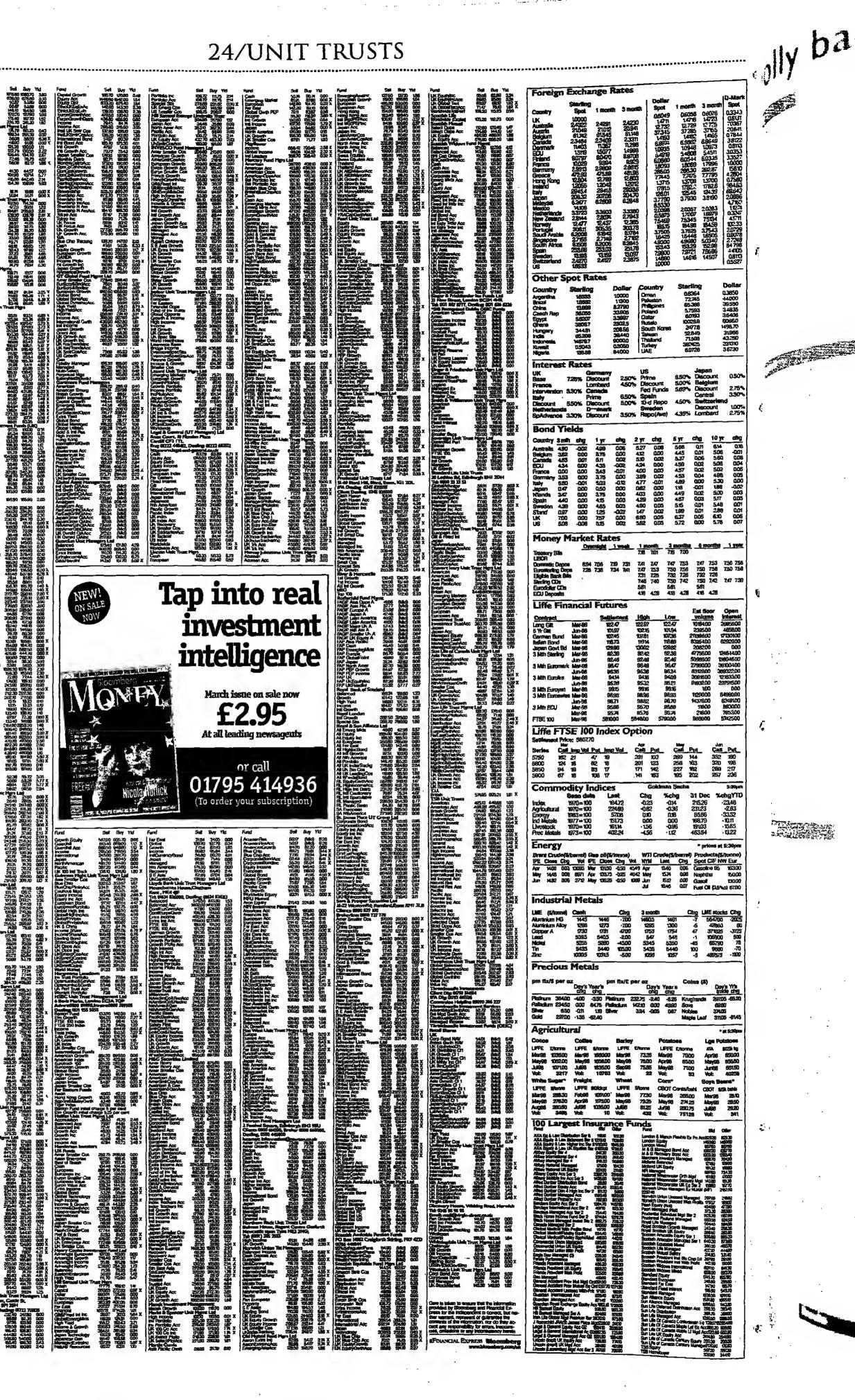
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achievement - and its recent

rapprochement with the Rugby

League - at a gala dinner on Fri-

day. We will be celebrating

those achievements, whilst

still needs to be done," said

Barla's chief executive, Maurice

The League has commis-

sioned a study into the optimum

Holly backers praying for rain

By Greg Wood

JUST because there is rain trickling down your window. there is no guarantee that something similar is happening at Cheltenham, but the home of jumps racing takes such a grip convinced that his hurdles caon punters' minds at this time reer is simply an appetiser beof the year that it was no surprise yesterday to see ante- course over fences. Murphy post mooey for Freoch Holly. admits that it is a little frusone of the more interesting trating to give the elements Hurdle in just 13 days' time.

At any rate, Coral claim that punters wanted to back Ferme three or four like him and dy Murphy's runner, although it may just be that their weather forecaster predicted rain for the next week or so and the Holly's Cheltenham target - the bookmaker thought it wise to gelding is also engaged in both take evasive action. Whatever the Supreme and Royal &

now a 14-1 chance for the most wait. "We're no further Fallon at the High Court last These letters are intended to welfare is at least as important Champion, even though his along," he says. "We said that week oo whether there is any natural watering of the course between now and the Festival, but French Holly is an imposing

specimen, and his trainer is fore he moves on to the main contenders for the Champioo such a crucial role in the Festival decision making, although "having said that, you could give I'd put up with that hardship any

Murphy insists that French the reason, French Holly is SunAlliance Novice Hurdles-

participation depends not just if it came up heavy, he'd go for the Champion, and it's forecast for heavy rain over the next week. If he got soft ground, he'd have a serious chance, and since his last race he's been fantastic, we couldn't be more

> RICHARD EDMONDSON NAP: Acolina (Wolverhampton 4.55) NB: Cuthill Hope (Wetherby 3.30)

happy with him." Meanwhile, at Portman Square yesterday, the Jockey Club concluded its deliberations on matters arising out of the Too Cees libel trial and decided not to re-open the case, following the award of £195,000 in damages to Jack Ramsden,

The Club emphasised, howbe introduced from the start of the Flat turf season will make it easier to re-open inquiries unnon-triers, and that offenders will risk stiffer penalties. The Club also said that it would continue to send private letters -"yellow cards" - to individuals holding a licence to either train

whether these letters should be rather than if." made public," Malcolm Wallace, the Club's director of regulation, said. "Having taken legal advice, we decided not to make the letters public, because to do so would be unfair when the person concerned has not been Lynda Ramsden and Kieren found in breach of any rule.

prevent breaches of the rules if not more so," Webbon said. and are a part of an educational ever, that a new procedure to process aimed at maintaining Midgley received a 10-day ban and improving standards."

In a separate development, the Club's senior veterinarian testing of runners is likely to be introduced as soon as technology allows. There are some very strong arguments for testdescribed in the High Court as ing runners before rather than after they race," Peter Webbon, the Club's chief veterinary advisor, said. "My personal view "We considered fully is that it is inevitable, when

> change of emphasis for the 23 March inclusive. Noshinan-Club's veterinary force in the nikin was placed last. field, with vets becoming much The top chaser Dublin Fly more concerned in future with er has been retired.

The conditional jockey Paul for reckless riding after his actions put a rival jockey on the floor at Catterick yesterday. In der Rule 151, which governs disclosed that pre-race dope the bumper race, Midgley's mount Noshinannikin veered badly left, squeezing up Mazzelmo against the far rail. Mazzelmo's rider Seamus Durack clung desperately to his mount but fell to the ground 10 yards before Mazzelmo got to the line.

After an inquiry the stewards found that Midgley guilty of reckless riding. His ban runs Webbon also revealed a from 12 to 14, 16 to 20, 21 and

the welfare of horses. "In the Rain has put today's meetpast, integrity was the top thing, ing at Chepetow in doubt. There but the view now is that racing is a 7.30 inspection.

The number of kilos of

pitch conditions for playing the "We hope to design the safest possible playing surface for summer rugby, one which reduces the risk of injury to play-

TODAY'S NUMBER

500

pork (worth about £1,750) for which the Romanian footballer, Ion Radu, was sold by Valcea to the Secand Division side, Jiul Petmsani. Valcea, a division below, will sell the meat to meet the cost of their players' unpaid wages.

Chepstow

and more to 1

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Marie And De Commercial Commercia

Mariffe to be to the con-

Tillian

Bang Saldania,

21 Wal.

2.10 Glitter Isla 2.40 Admiral's Guest 3.10 Kilmington

HYPERION

3.40 Brackenheeth 4.10 Malwood Castle 4.45 Sadler's Realm

Bush-rand, undulating course with run-in of 240yds.

© Course is on A466. Chepstow station (Cardiff - Gloucester line) fro. ADMISSSION: Cub-Ckf. Rathersiale SP1 FOAP's SS1, Course SS (CAP's SS), course open only on bank holidays and for Sunday card. CARI PARKE Free.

© LEADING TRAINSIS: M Pipe 44-196 (22.4%), P Hobbs 22-86 (25.6%), M Twishon-Davies 21-175 (13.3%), P Micholis 19-44 (23.6%), O Nicholson 17-86 (24.5%), M Twishon-Davies 21-175 (13.3%), P Micholis 19-44 (22.6%), O Nicholson 17-86 (24.5%), C Llowellyn 16-97 (16.5%), A Maguire 14-60 (23.3%), R Jahmson 12-59 (20.3%), B JANKERED FIRST TIME: None.

2.10 GREAT EXPECTATIONS CHASE (CLASS B) £10,500 added GREAT EXPECTATIONS CITATED TO THE 2005 PHONE PHO 18-343 CALITER ISLE CA) (Ass Throthy Pikington) J Gifford 511 12 PH
18-343 CALITER ISLE CA) (Ass Throthy Pikington) J Gifford 511 12 PH
18-343 CALITER ISLE CA) (Ass (O) (Lock Hardington) Main H Knight 6 11 12 J Calit
18-344 MELSTOCK MERGEE (40) (Lacty Continue) C Brooks 6 11 1 G Brooks
18-22LI3 ONE WORD (11) (Seniorius Commercial Componentin) D Williams 6 11 6 J Mr D Dose

FORM GUIDE

Should the meeting go whead yesterday's rain will make this a real test of stamins and it brings Glitter late tight into the rectioning. The eight-year-old, who couldn't get into Alem Moor's race at Wincorton last time, won twice in testing conditions at Unighted last service and will be more at home on the ground than the others. However, with only four namers there's unifiely to be any great pace and this is shaping up nicely for OSAN with his turn of foot. That was very much in evidence when he wan over two and a half miles at Uttoeser last season and he surfaced his rolly defeat in these runs over fences when stilling to cope with the uneful Serude hot it is over three nites at Kempton. Oten Rey had it months off effect that and was up against in-form house when reappearing at Accot in Jenuary. He failed to get a look-in against speeder opposition but will at least be shaped for it if and this race is much more fledy to be run to suit him. Methods Meggle also had a lot on her plate at Accot last time and gave an excellent account of harself in fourth bothind Wade Road over two miles, atelying on in the clearing stages. She lacks experience in comparison but there's nothing wrong with the fumping and also hight be the one to best over this longer bit.

2.40 POACHER'S SELLING HANDICAP HURDLE (CLASS G) £2,500 added 2m 110yds Penalty Value £2,234

Minimum teetight: 70st. Thus herationp weights: Lifts 9st 8ts. Lony Pandangon 9st 4th.
Minimum teetight: 70st. Thus herationp weights: Lifts 9st 8ts. Lony Pandangon 9st 4th.
Minimum Morascch, 19-1 Lifts Servins, Allow's Mirror, Coeur Bettert, Cadbury Candi
1997: Scotlish Wedding 7 10 10 R Johnston 7-1 (T Welf) 17 ran

HYPERION

2.00 Polydamus 2.30 Greville Again 3.00 Hurst

Fiyer 3.30 Ham N'Eggs 4.00 Cattly Hang 4.35

GOTNG: Good to Soft (Soft in places).

GLRIN-hend ovel circuit. Run-in of 200yds signity uphil.

GLOURS Is NE of town on B1224 near junction of ASS and AL

ADMISSION-Club E's faccompanied undo-"Ga free); Reternals

ER; Course S3 (OAP's 1150). CAR PARIC. Free.

GLEADING TRAINERS: Miss M Reveloy 45-197 (223%) G Richards

2-110 (219%), T Eastword 23-65 (242%) O Nictorison 19-75 (253%).

GLEADING JOCKEYS: P Niver 43-78 (247%), L Wyer 42-106

GLEADING JOCKEYS: P Niver 43-78 (247%), L Wyer 42-106

GLEADING JOCKEYS: P Niver 43-78 (247%), L Wyer 42-106

GLEADING JOCKEYS: P Niver 43-78 (247%), L GREAT (197%),

GENOURITES: 205-460 (42.7%), B Dobbin 20-118 (19.9%),

GLEADING FROM TIME: September Breeze (viscred) (3.0).

2.00 HAREWOOD NOVICE HURDLE (CLASS E) £3,000 added 2m

2.30 SICKLINGHALL NOVICE CHASE (CLASS D) 25,000 added 3m 1f

3.00 HOECHST ROUSSEL PANACUR EBF 'NH' NOVICE HURDLE (CLASS D) £3,800 added filles & mares 2m 4f 110yds

Borleagh Pilot 5.05 Sweet Lord

Wetherby

If MISSS CNEDEE appears to have he sid complement of weight, she's sclusely 3to lower in the restings then when third in a non-seller at Rundon in January and she can make up for her first-Right departure when long acids-on for a Whosenton claimer lest time. This French Fist winner best Mistry Cay (who went on to land a hat-hick) at Lucidow first time cut and then are one or two others to do the donkey work for her today. The most Right candidate to set the pace is Minster's Madess, who is in her element when making the running and did just that when besting Partiales and the staying-on Adminisher Guest at Leicester lest time. After's Minror had an off sky and was only seventh. The rain has given Minster's Materia the sending Partiales and the staying-on Adminisher Guest a 6th pull for just over two lengths, she ten't as effective when something takes her on and the fighty-weighted Caddbury Castle is filedy to do just that. The ground could make this the test of stamins Caddbury Castle wants and sive couldn't be ruised out. Conditions were desperate and found out Missical Mineror th at Earter on New Year's Day. Although only third behind Coeur Settles and Alcoh Minero in that occasion, he rain well and could easily reverse the form with the pull he has. Fester ground and the strunger company were against Beyond Cur Hausch at Teurion. Inst time, he ideally needs a longer try than the but the ground should make this a sufficient test of stamins and he had shaped as it returning to form in the privious race. Don't rule is him out.

CASTRONO Inhalts A.L.C. MODES**

25-1 Boarnel, Bombe Charger, Durelche View, Rethinel, 30-1 oth 1997: Terramone Tring 7 tl 2 R Ferrant 15-2 (Mrs. J Phres) 12 mm

The lightly-record MUSIC THERAPY, a full-brother to the ament Suny Bay, is a cheer on looks and carrie through its first test over fences with flying colours when beeting Herbesian Chouse and the Release to the Arthropher to the ament Suny Bay, is a cheer on looks and carrie through its first test over fences with flying colours when beeting Herbesian Chouse and The Releaseth — has won two good races since — and Music Therbesian Release on a good deal for the experience, expectedly now he's supposed up in distance. Refer Bay was tried in a handling at Luciaey least three and gase a feer account of herself considering at the weight she had in a sean that was a lot better than it first coloued. She stays well and is one of probably only three who might benefit should Music Therapy not come up with the expected improvement. Dark Stranger was really up against it behind Excartifique and Fidding The Fatch here 11 days ago. While there might not be anything of that callers in this field, it wouldn't pay to undersethme Music Therapy, a horse with an awful lot of scope. Kinnington, no match for The Tolsech at Ascot has time, had apprecised the ground when left clear to best Fortytero Dae a destroe at Fortwell in the previous race. Oven Burrows, which riding better that switch he staying on when others have given up.

3.40 PRESTIGE NOVICE HURDLE (CLASS A) £15,000 added 3m Penalty Value £9,690

BETTING:7-4 Wyngerd Lack, 9-4 O'Mother, 9-2 Second Fields, 11-2 Hunt Flyer, 12-1 Dielent Hills, 14-1 Gyper Rose, Pheneuris Deligiti, 18-1 Ker-rischie, Madge McSplenk, September Breeze, 20-1 others

3.30 HELMSLEY NOVICE HANDICAP CHASE

(CLASS C) £7,000 added 2m

4.00 EAST KESWICK HANDICAP CHASE (CLASS C) 27,000 added 2m 4f 110yds

4.35 ASKHAM BRYAN HANDICAP HURDLE (CLASS E) £3,000 added 2m

4.35 (CLASS E) £3,000 acided 2m

1 831 HOH EXPRESS (29) (D) May J Remarked DTI 10 N Williamson
2 33871 METHRAC (29) (D) W Caradigham 6 18 ___ R McGath (3)
3 0322 HASSAM (29) (D) W Caradigham 6 18 ___ R McGath (3)
4 94-25 SAMANED (11) (D) May L Scholl 6 11 2 ___ T Rend
4 94-25 SAMANED (11) (D) May L Scholl 6 11 2 ___ T Rend
5 SAULUS ADVANCE RAST (13) (D) M Dods 6 10 12 ___ A Dobbin 9
6 PASSA KERNOF (117) (D) M Harmond's 10 8 ___ A Ede (7)
7 50005 BORILLEGON PLOT (24) May S Bornatz 10 6 ___ D Parlar
8 U14-83 TAMMAL (1024) (14) (D) M Harmond's 10 5 ___ A Magnetr
9 10 4822R POLY ABLANSHMA (14) (D) M Smiths 8 10 5 ___ M Herrocks (5)
10 4822R POLY ABLANSHMA (14) (D) M Smiths 8 10 5 ___ M Herrocks (5)
11 26028 SOMMA WIRELES (14) (D) T Ehrington 8 10 2 ___ M Smith
12 50-570 WOODPHELD VISION (20) May M Reveloy 7 10 __ A Smith
13 25000 CLAPPENT SPECH (16) (CD) May S Shill 7 10 __ A Smith
14 GROD ARRE (18) May H Melica 8 10 6 ___ Mr A Walken
15 PASS POINT DUTY (E2) (D) F Martich 8 10 6 ___ B Shirry

Affording weight: 10-1 Into hardscap weighter Current Speech 8st 112, And
2st 40, Point Duty 8st 112.

Melicant weight: 10-1 Into hardscap weighter Current Speech 8st 112, And
2st 40, Point Duty 8st 112.

Melicant weight: 10-2 Into hardscap weighter Current Speech 8st 112, And
2st 40, Point Duty 8st 112.

Melicant weight: 10-3 Into hardscap weighter Current Speech 8st 112, And
2st 40, Point Duty (24) (D) F Martich 8 10 6 ___ B Shirry

Millerman weight: 10-4 Into Bourse, p-2 Remail, 6-1 Tip it in, 6-1 Feature, 10-1

Millerman, 10-1 Others

Millerman weight: 10-1 Current Speech, Poly American, 16-1 Signer Wireless, 10-1

Millerman, 10-1

Millerman weight: 10-1 Current Speech, Poly American, 16-1

Millerman, 10-1

5.05 MICKLETHWAITE HANDICAP HURDLE (CLASS D) £3,800 added 2m 4f 11 Dyds

Minimum weight: 10st. Type learning weight: 10st. Daughter (n)

Minimum weight: 10st. Type learning weight: Apoolo's Daughter (st 72).

BETTING: 11-8 Sevent Lord, 11-4 Executive Design, 4-1 Apollo's Daughter, 5-1 Desmander, 5-1 Desmander, 5-1 Desmander.

Forther jumped his way into the Cheleraham Festival picture with his effortless with from Rujyarra Creet M Lingfield. That was some performance from an eight-year-cid with pressous little experience in bumpers and having his first race over hundle and it will be interesting to see how he fame in this much stronger company. Bad Currete continues to progress and followed his seep Forthwell success by beeing listboys stabilismess Strong Rel and useful juverile Borazon over two and a half miles here it days ago. He stayed on gamely under pressure and should get this three miles. but Entopy's year less a class has to its stability. Meansonrie was well suited by time miles M Acont in Jenzarry and beet previous and absequent winner My Shonandosh with something in hand. That was his best performance to dain, yet one with parhaps the greatest acope of all is the twice-raced EISPICEM. Having shaped wat over two and a half miles here in November on he debut, Schien went to Wincentin for a small race and had it won long before the second less. On that showing there is no question he has the stands of his career, there is no claud he is a young hone of immense promise who could will have the improvement in him. Birtotale has time who over the trop fand further) on soft ground and cartainly worth fell through lack of dearnine.

Selection:

4.10 HUNTSMAN'S HANDICAP CHASE (CLASS C) £7,000 added 3m Penalty Value £5,061 TEPOP GREENHIL TARE AWAY (25) (C) (C) (AS PF Payes) P Hobbs 10 11 13. ALTH SPANE HIGH ANDER (10) (07) (67) (6 N.) Embrecos J Galbori 10 11 6 P Hide 1929 DO RIGHTLY (100) (M Pizperick) M Bradenck 8 11 4 P Hide 1929 JACOB'S WIFE (42) (The Black Shape Plots) P R Webber 8 10 11 J. J. A. McCarthy

— B OFFICE 6-2 Boxes Highlandis; 4-1 Malescol Castle, 5-1 Forbot Roman, 6-1 Poscher, 6-1 Do Rightin, 10-1 Green'd Thre Assay, Martie's Lad, 12-7 Jacob's Wife PETTINGS 6-2 Bayes Ingramme, +1 — ly, 10-1 Greenfull Thre Assay, Minifiate I. 1987: No corresponding race,

FORM GUIDE

This is tricky in that there are several hare who could win if recepturing their best form.

Do Flightly, a germs front-turner who struggled on for third behind Nathten Led and Mr Mulligen at Chethorham two years ago being a prime example. He's reced only once aince then, and that was back in November. Generall'likes Aeray, who loves these considers goes well in the ground and is proteably the better prospect today on his first outing in almost a year, but MALWOOD CASTLE comes from a yend doing so well at present and his, the In-form Array Thorison up as a borna. Malwood Cestis handled a slog in the mud wast at Fortwell lest time out and, as he ided in tong and almost let in Brogen Lady, has been mised just a pound. Breve lightwarder is obviously none the worse for being dierrounded when according to the worse for being dierrounded when according at Fosiostone the time better and on that run will take all the besting. Poucher loves the ground and is preferred to statismats blandler's lady. FORM GUIDE

4.45 GAMEKEEPER'S HANDICAP HURDLE (CLASS C) £5,500 added 2m 110yda Penalty Value £3,778

BETTING: 11-8 Sadier's Reaks, 3-1 Ster Selection, 4-1 Supertop, 11-2 Son Of America 1997: Kadestof 7 tl 6 X Alepuru (7) 12-1 (8 Dickh) 14 non

23-13 SUPERTOP (121) (D) (EF) (Maching) Maching 7 2 6...
217-11- SON OF AMSHAM (240) (D) (F J Sainstung) Mac M Jornes 5 7 6 ...
22-13 SUPERTOP (121) (D) (EF) (Min Barbara Lungo) L Lungo 10 11 73 ...
CIZTI SADLER'S REALM (R2) (CD) (B D Resing) P Hobbs 5 71 1

FORM GUIDE

STAR SELECTION, fifth in has search Switton Hurdle as a novice and three times a winner when he had suitable conditions like today, has given every indication of returning to his best in his latest two outings and would have limited nearer the in-form Caulier and Lady Delay, surfer third in a big hurdless in Ireland, May lest time if he hachift bundlend at the second last. He's worth another chance. Seafler's Realm has had plenty of time to recover since wireing in atroclose conditions at Eveter on New Year's Day, this third success or the first on each ground. Even going up the he edit gets plenty of weight, and is the one to best once more. Son Of Anether, impressive when running the opposition ragged at Kalso elmost a year ago, heart been our since and in now in a stable having a torrid time at present. He is best watched, as is Superior on ground that wouldn't be his first choice.

Wolverhampton

HYPERION 1.50 Browning 2.20 Hever Fever 2.50 ITALIAN SYMPHONY (nap) 3.20 Chewit (nb) 3.50 Sualtach 4.20 Sing For Me 4.55 Bathe in Light

Suphtach 4.20 Sing For Me 4.55 Bathe In Light
GONG: Standard (Afweether track).

STALLS: Ti – outside, remainder – haide.

DRAW ADVANTAGE: High from 6' to 1m 44.

Fibresand, brit-hand, oval course.

© Course in N of born on A449. Wolverhampton station 1m. ADMISSION: Cub. 25; Tetternate 25 (CAP members of Diamond.

Cub. 24; Vlowing Restaurant 22590 Including anteriors and meal.

Cut-Cut; Vlowing Restaurant 22590 Including strance and meal.

© LEADING JOCKEYS: 8 Sandars 41-34 (1274), G Center 33-229

(Many), Deem McKeever 27-254 (1074), J Cutim 25-406 (8,274).

BLENCERD FRIST TIME: Feyer. 2230 (Mocred), Quisen's Pageant (8,50), Precisely (4,20), Good For You (4,20). (CLASS C) £7,000 added 2m

1 PA-104 AVANTI EPRESS 400 C Eprino 10 6 A Williamson

2 "MUP PENTLANDS FLYER (46) I Howard Johnson 7 11 4 A Dobbin

3 41,331 CUTHAL HOPE (25) Ms 6 Smith 7 11 4 A Dobbin

5 20254 SHINBON EDGE (8) (20) Teaching 8 10 A Williamson

5 20254 SHINBON EDGE (8) (20) Teaching 8 10 A Williamson

7 ASSUS MAINTER GLORY (50) (CD) M W Easterby 7 10 3.P Carberry

8 3P-055 THOMAS HOPE (8) E CD in W Easterby 7 10 3.P Carberry

Minimum weight: 10 L True handloop weight: Eiona's Hope 801 17b.

BETTING 3-1 Hom NTEGGS, 7-2 Avanti Express, 4-1 Cushin Hope, 11-2

Shipleg Edge, 3-1 Publisheds Flyer, 7-1 Minister Glory, 5-1 Non Visinge,

16-1 Trious's Hope

EAST KESWICK HANDINCAP CHASE

1.50 CAPRICORN MAIDEN STAKES (CLASS D) (DIV I) \$5,500 added 1m 100yds

2.20 CAPRICORN MAIDEN STAKES (CLASS D) (DIV II) £5,500 added 1m 100yds

1 0 CRAFEBOOK MARCHESA (M) J M Bradey 497.5 Drowns 6

2 05-38 HAVM (8) J Wharton 497 A McCarrier (5) 4 V

3 HAMA JOAN LEY J Roberting 497 N Carriers 7

4 000- AMBRICHOUS (141) D Loder 38 S. S. Sanders 8

5 04 BLAZING BLLY (22) C Days 3 88 J Clubs 6

5 50000 DARRING MEWS (156) 0 O Nail 366 J Admins 2

2.50 ARIES CLAIMING STAKES (CLASS F)

23,000 added 7f

1 -2131 (DALMA SYMPHONY (7) (DD) P Bens 483 A McCarby (5) 5 V
2 200;6 OSTOLAN (7) (D) J L Eyes 59 2 R Lappid 7
3 10224 THEATRE MACE (11) (D2) D State 68 13 J Faceling 8
4 -10166 ELITE HOPE (7) (CD) N Trider 66 12 Dear McKacous 2
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10 00390 CALORES (Jaz) R McGin 58 6 Dain Glacer D
10 00390 CALORES (Jaz) R McGin 58 6 Dain Glacer D
11 declared SETTING: 15-8 ballan Symphony, 7-2 Theatre Magic, 11-2 Ortoins, 13-2 Elia Hops, 7-1 C Histry, 8-1 Candido, 12-1 Will To Win, 16-1 Acreman, 33-1 others

3.20 TAURUS STAKES (CLASS C) E8,000 added 7f 60331- CHEWIT (W) (CD) G L Moore 5 9 4 _____ C Leather (3) 1 P040-3 PRINCE OF MINA (ZZ) Lord Hunfington 6 9 4 ____ W Ryan 3

1 INVERSORDON (11) (C) J Emisso 3 66... 1 ITHADTOBEYOU (18) P Colo 3 68..... 19-35 CLASSY CLEO (7) P Bure 3 5 1 _____ A McCarby (5) 5

BETTING: 7-4 Chevit, 9-4 Classy Clao, 11-2 Raids, 7-1 Itheotobayou, 8-7 Prince Of India, Savetag, 14-1 Inversordon

3.50 SHROPSHIRE GALVANISERS H'CAP (CLASS C) £10,000 added 1m 1f 79yds

20351 SUALTACH (11) (CD) R Holinsheed 5 86 ... A McCardly (5) 3 451411 FALLED TO HIT (9) (C) N Literaden 5 57 (Dud.P Feesey (5) 4 B 68-054 PERPETUAL LIGHT (13) (CD) JJ Quint 5 B 1 L Chemicel: 2 V

BETTING: 3-1 Nerob, 4-1 Suplanth, 11-2 Green's Pageent, 6-1 Plan For Profit, 7-1 Gelf Standi, 6-1 Felled To Hit, 10-1 Castaners Lady, 12-1 Per-petial Light, 14-1 Bardon Hill Boy

4.20 AQUARIUS SELLING HANDICAP (CLASS G) 52,500 added 3YO ST

DOOR MYSTICAL RODGE (42) M Dock & TO..... II 000004 KANTONE (7) P Siene 7 IL Minimum weight: 7st 10th, True handicap weights: Super Impo

7xt SE, Kerstone 7nt Stb. BETTING: 7-4 Indian Splendour, 6-4 Stay For Me, 7-1 Oriel Girl, 8-1 Ken-tons, 12-1 Sans Rivele, 14-1 Sectional Guest, 16-1 Super Impose, 26-1

4.55 GEMINI HANDICAP (CLASS D) 26,000 added filles & mares 1m 4f 12-12 BATHE IN LIGHT (16) (CD) (SF) Lord Huntingston 4.9 10.

2 5631-3 AEOLINA (FR) (16) S Kettlewell 4.9.5 ____ P Fredericks (7) 4 7 DOOGO HOELE CANOHERE (25) O Windo 8 7 10 Joanna Badger (7) 3

Minimum weight: 7st 10th. True handloop weights: Sidney The Kidney. Nobble Caronine 7st 5th.

ETT 118(2 p. 4 Bath in 1.0)(4), 5-2 Palacagate Lo, 100-30 Apolina, 4-1 Rabidest Casatt, 10-1 Sidney The Kidney, 14-1 Size Hopper, 33-1 Nobble Caronine.

Warrington in the last round. The Rugby League's mangame in summer. agement committee decided that Martyn, scorer of two tries in Saints' Wembley win over

Oldroyd.

Bradford last May, had no case ers whilst playing or training," said the League's acting chief to answer after studying the video of the incident. Wigan police have blocked executive, Neil Tunnicliffe. plans to screen the tie oo Saturday 14 March, because Wigan Athletic are at home to Oldham Athletic that day. The match will

Saint Martyn not

sinner in Cup tie

Helens stand-off, has been recognising that plenty of work

Rugby League

TOMMY MARTYN, the St

cleared to face Wigan in the

quarter-final of the Silk Cut

Challenge Cup, despite being

placed on report for a suspect-

ed high tackle in the victory over

By Dave Hadfield

oow be the live television match on BBC2 the following day, with Castleford's meeting with Sheffield the choice for Saturday afternoon - the third round in a row that Castleford, supposedly ooe of the game's unfashionable clubs, will have been televised. ' The British Amateur Rugby League Association (Barla) cel-

ebrates its silver jubilee today. Set up in 1973 because of neglect by the professional game, Barla has presided over a growth from 125 teams to around 1,300 today.

Barla will be marking that

England stunned by fast goal

Hockey

Bitt Colwill reports from Ipoh, Malaysia

Germany DISASTER struck for England 64 seconds into their third game in the Six Nations' Sultan Azian Shah Cup here yesterday when the German captain, Christian Blunck, caught them unawares from the top of the

a dour, megry game. tween England and Germany attractive and this game was no exception with 122 infringemeots being recorded. Neither umpire made any effort to penalise the German blocking tactics with anything more than a free hit and consequently the game became a tedious midfield

With Russell Garcia introduced into the fray after 12 minutes, England began to create

a number of chances without being able to find the finish. England also failed from two first-half penalty corners. The pattern of play was

much the same in an undistinguished second half. England failed to take advantage of the Germans being reduced to 10 men for the final five mioutes following the suspension of Blunck for a tackle on Justin Pidcock.

England's coach Barry Dancer, said: "I am happy with circle after a cross from Patrick the performance today, in par-Bellenbaum for the only goal in ticular with the improvement in Seldom are eccounters be- not always take the right options. If you had said we would have held Germany to one goal when we arrived bere I would have been very pleased."

ENGLAND: B Mason (Reading); B Garrard (Fedelington), J Halts (NOA), J Wyatt (Reading); B Wargh (Soutigate, carp); Kelbir Takher (Cernock), J Pideoek (Carnock), N Thompson (Oti Loughtonians); B Shatpe (Cernock), J Lae (Old Loughtonians), M Pleam (Reading), Substitutes used: R Garda (HDN), C Mayer (Cernock), A March (Mayer A Mayer A M (Cannock). A Humphrey (Cannock), Man-prest Kocher (Reading). GERMANY: M Konelizak; M Green; A Lente, J-P Toxes, M Elmer; P Belenbuum, C-Nayenholis; C Elmer; M Welchwasse, C Bunch Capt. O Dorrike, Substitutes isseet: M Schraber, S Reinell, P Cross.

NORTHERN COUNTIES EAST LEAGUE

Premier Division: Heliam v Brigg. NORTH WEST COUNTIES LEAGUE. First Division: St Helens v Gloscop North

JEWSON WESSEX LEAGUE First Divi-alon: Brockenhurst v Cowes Sports. UMIJET SUSSEX COUNTY LEAGUE

LEAGUE OF WALES: Conwy v Caernarfron Town.

PONTINS LEAGUE First Division: Coventry v Notta County (70); Menchester City
v Laicester (70) (at Attricham FC); Olchem
v West Bromwich (70) (at Boundary Park).
Second Division: Barneley v Shrevsbury
(70); Blackpool v Rochdale (70); Rotherham v Bradford (70); Sheffield Und v Lincoln (70) (at Don Walloy Stedium); Wereham
v Burnley (70). Third Division: Newcastie
v Chester (70).

AVON INSURANCE COMBINATION First
Division: Luton v Wimbledon (20) (at

NUT WEST AND A CONTROL OF THE STATE OF THE S

BUDWEISER LEAGUE: Themes Valley v

BOWLS: English Women's Indoor National Chempionships (Yarmouth).

BOXING: English ABA finels (National In-door Arens, Birmingham).

Today's fixtures

Football 7.45 unless stated

cootest.

FA CARLING PREMIERSHIP NATIONWICE POOTBALL LEAGUE

Below: 7,30 unless stated BELL'S SCOTTISH LEAGUE

THIRD CIVISION East Stirling v Que East String v Ducer's Park

UNIBOND LEAGUE Premier Division: Winslord v Alireton, First Division: Great
Harwood v Greins; Whitby v Neitherfield,
League Cup fourth-round replay: Gainsborough Trinty v Beithop Auckland.

DR NARTENS LEAGUE Premier Division:
Stifingbourne v Rothwelt (245) Midland Division: Corty v Redditch; Soffull Boro v
VS Rugby, Southern Division: Pareturn v
Bashlow.

RYMAN LEAGUE Third Division: Heriow v Tring Guerdien Insurance Cup semi-fi-nel first leg: Oxford City v Borehem

ARNOTT IMSURANCE MORTHERN LEAGUE First Division: Guisborough v Ellingham Town; Stockton v Essington CWM, League Cup: Northelerion v Tow Law.

Weekend fixtures and pools guide FA Cup sixth round

FA Carling Premiership Also playing (not on pools coupon); Sheffold Wednesday v Manchester United. Playing Sunday: Chalses v Asson Villa. Nationwide Football League

First Division imingham v QPR

Second Division

Third Division

Bell's Scottish League Second Division Also playing: Inverness Cally Strange Third Division Also playing (not on coupons): Arbroath v Ross County.

GM Vauxhall Conference 45 Leek v Fernborough 46 Northwich v Hereford 47 Rushden v Cheltenhern ...

Puss Dirembus Hauth V Auther, St Namen V String.
Four drawer: Southempton v Everton, Me-wall v Glingham, Brighton v Hardapool, Cusente Park v Berwick.
Five awayer: Notingham Forest, Wesford, Ful-ham, Sternhousermal, Kidderminster.
Ten homest Coversty, Leeds, Liverpool, Sun-derland, Beistol Rovers, Polarborough, Torquey, Clydebank. Northwich, Rushden.

INDEPENDENT RACING SERVICES 0891 261 CHEPSTOW 971 WETHERBY 972 982 WOLVERHAMPTON 973 983 ALL COURSES RESULTS 0891 261 970

CATTERICK Courty Rates CSC. Vision C 1924/15/86. This CSC. 1927/100. Thistopic CSC. 1927/100. Thistopic CSC. 1927/100. This CSC. 1924/15/9. Part 1924. 1925. 1924. 192

4.00: 1. WHAT JEE WANTS IN MCOREN 7-2 A.O.O. 1. WHAT JAM WANTS (P. McGrath) 7-2 law 2. Cyprass America 9-2; 3. Archerist 7-4. T1 ran. 25, det. L/ O'NAR, Parribl. The E.S.T. 17 ran. 25, det. L/ O'NAR, Parribl. The E.S.T. E230, S200, E170 DF, 2730, CSF; CSSS. Pictors 1900, Try. S770, NR, Arrogen Itals, Galland, Anned, Recruitmert, Thery Batou, 4. A.D. 1. PERINCE OF STAIRTS (F. Gently) 2-1 law 2. Kitchumeny Castle 3-1; 3. Mose Pegasatt 5-2,6 mas. 8. 3, (M-Isramoro), Micharland, Kole. 1900, E170, E170, DF, E230, CSF; S201, E001, E170, E170,

LEICESTER 2.50: L. Dest Of HOMOR (F. Lohnson's 20-1);
2. Philasels 11-6 in; 3. Bold Pigeos 21-9 ma.
5.25 (F. Lan, Prossippe); Taker 20-24; 2153, 2154;
2244; Dr. 9483; CSP. 3452; Theast 1278;98;
2257; CT480; (best von); Nr. Sonne 16y Soon,
2.20: 1, WHO AMI (A Thermon); 11-2; 2. Win2009; 2-1 fax; 2. Cavarina Boy 31-1; 10 min. 7; E.
(F. Almar, Blandford Forum); Total 2300; 21-9;
2259; 22-22 Dr. 15-30 CSP: 2157; Thosat 2300; 21-97;
2259; 2252 Dr. 15-30 CSP: 2157; Thosat 2300; Dec 254.0.

150: 1. MAURACHAS (D Leely) 8-1; 2. Recollect 7 My 3. Jensey 23-1, 8 rat. 11, dat.
(Ms. J. Phren, Lepter Lembours; Tolic 25,00;
127q, Ctil, Dec 2500, CSF: 1729.

4.20: 1. SHEKELS (G Brader) 13-8; 2. Stongin 5-4 km; 3. Croelmann-Ba 40-1 7 rm. 12-26 (C Brooks, Lambourn) Fote: 12-50; 12-70; 12-60 (PF FUT) CSP 2.24 NF; Touselle 45-50: 1. PLAY GAMES 8, Harvey 12-1; 2. Dear Do 0-4 (km; 3. The Carrol Mee 9-4 f km; 3. The Carrol Mee 9-4 f km; 3. The Carrol Mee 9-4 f km; 5-70. Predicipal, 15-60 (Fut); 7-90 (160) (PF FUT); 7-90 (FUT); 7-90 (FU LINGFIELD LING FIELD

2.16: 1, MARK & H. Mongarij 9-2 loc: 2.

Byssic Rufo 7-1; 2. Culsin Arch 7-1; 15 ma. 5.
5° A. (G. I. Monrat, Brate 18:30; 12:30; 10:230.)

Dr. 22:200. CSP: C3440; Brase, 12:244. Ros.
138:50.

2.46: 1, MYSTICAL IA MCCarriy) 4-1; 2. Paie
Blanco 5-1; 3. Tangarino Phys. 7-4 (st. 9 ma. 14); 4-1; 40 lots 1. Subbl., Bate 19:4; 10:30 12:30.

2.110 Dr. 19:80.0 CSP: 12:271. The 17:100.

3.10: 1. SCHE MIGHT SAY (Date McGarent)
3-1; 3. Highbury Legand (2-1; 3. Seventy 1-2
te 6 rea. 13. II. (M. Johnston) Total Calls; CLTQ.
2300. CF: E730. CSF. E3407.
3.40: 1. HERR TREGIER (J. Culmt) 9-2 ter;
2. Chairmane Choles 5-1; 3. Poker School 251.11 res. 1%, 10 (Dr. J. Scengli, Tear Cr40; C2-40,
CMQ, CMA DF: CMAC CSF. (2202) Treat: CH002
This: E32470 (part word)
4.10: 1. PHILOSOPHIC (A McCarthy) 5-4 fer;
2. Heighth of Farms 20-1; 3. Piping Colours 12-1
14 res. Nk, 10 (Mrs. L. Jewel). Total: E285, E10,
SE00, S180. DF: E3360 (SSF: E278, Tecast.
22828. This: E32680 (part word)
4-40: 1. WITHOUT PHILOSOS (A Carl), 9-1;
2. Analog 11-4 fer; 3. Miss Saye 5-1, 8 res. 1. 1%,
3. (J. Pitch-Heyes). Total Calls (2-1),
Phosepot 25430. Camedpot: E380.
Phosepot 25430. Camedpot: E380.

Ramprakash flowers in face of old defeatism

defeats on a cricket field are generally a straightforward business. But if explanations from the spells in him. team's coaches - ranging from the pithy honesty of Keith "we played crap Fletcher to the wild optimism of David "we flippin" murdered 'em" Lloyd --- have reflected this in the past, the latest explanation, following Munday's crushing defeat by the West Indies, needs to incorporate the words delusion and defeatism.

England did not misread the pitch; only a dyslexic wearing sunglasses could have done that. What they misread was the effectiveness tall pace bowlers would have on that pitch. As Lloyd pointed out, yesterday: "We didn't have two 6ft 7in fast bowlers hitting a crumbling pitch at 80 miles an hour." No, one of them - Andy Caddick - was 12th man while the other - Angus

marathon efforts in Trinidad had only two or three good

Even before the game had started, England were arguing from false premises, basing their four-man bowling attack on an Australian model that includes a peerless leg-spinner and a inp-class fast bowler, Glenn McGrath, now, incidentally, broken down from overuse. Aping this aspect of the Aussies' game is self-delusion on a grand scale, as was the notion that had England won the toss, then they too would also have won the game.

With two spinners and two seam bowlers, Atherton was committed to winning what was always going to be a crucial toss, even more so in the case of England's pace-light team. He didn't and boy did it show, particularly in England's cricket after lunch on the first day.

POST-MORTEMS of England Fraser, still exhausted after his Derek Pringle, Cricket Correspondent, says England's excuses disguise the real reasons behind latest Test defeat to West Indies

> Cricketers are not the most opaque of people. Generally their body language lays bare their innermost beliefs. By the time Brian Lara and Shivnarine Chanderpaul had finished with them, it did not need Desmond Morris to tell you that most of them knew that the game was up. The next day, the second of four, all but Stewart, Mark Ramprakash and Robert Croft batted like men condemned to fate over

which they had no dominion. It is that kind of defeatism. peculiar tn English cricket, that Stephen Bull, the team's psychologist - out here in Guyana until last Thursday - should really be tackling. It is a malaise that once again stems from the amount of domestic cricket played, where unpromising sit-

uations tend not to be fought for sell. The West Indies is a notoin the belief, often mistaken, that riously difficult place to keep the next match will be different.

England tend to play their Test cricket in much the same way, often fighting back with far more conviction than when coufronted by parity and the chance to initiate proceedings rather than react to them after valuable ground has been conceded. Generalisations rarely lend

themselves to mitigation though, and the course of the match may well have differed had Stewart not dropped Chanderpaul on the first morning when the left-hander was on nine, some 109 runs short of his eventual contribution.

However, on that pitch - its components seemingly atom-Although not all were straightforward, it was just one ised every time a ball was banged of a dozen chances missed, half in hard -- it was back to the misof them by a hapless Jack Rusmatches of a decade ago, when

wicket, but Russell is now so low

un confidence that there is lit-

tle difference between him and

his counterpart, David Williams.

a wicketkeeper not only too

short for Tests but lightweight,

Russell has been a staunch

and patient servant of England,

but his time has surely now

passed. Asking Stewart to keep

may be loaded with risk, but with

Russell hupelessly out of sorts

with both bas and gloves, it has

become a necessity rather than

English pea-shooters used to in the first stand when England take on West Indian cannons.

Without grass to belp Fraser and Dean Headley, and with the game too far out of reach by the time Croft, but not Phil Tufnell, started to become effective, England did not begin to compete until it was too late. As Lloyd put it: "We didn't play at our maxi-mum when conditions dictated we had to play above our maximum to compete."

For Atherton's team, the imbalance between bad and good cricket, particularly among the batsmen, once more cost them the game. Mind you, as Lloyd pointed ont: "Batting in those conditions was a severe examination especially against [Curtly] Ambrose and [Courtney] Walsh. Their difference in height and pace made it more difficult."

For that reason, Ramprakash's innings, particularly the one be played under great duress

needed to avoid the follow-on, was a revelation as, to a lesser extent, was Croft's.

Given his previously chequered history at this level, and against this opposition, Ramprakash's late germination allows England to leave here with more genuine optimism than might otherwise have been the case with three front-line batsmen, Atherton, Hussain and Thorpe, again having underperformed.

"The mood is much better than it was after the loss in Trinidad," confirmed Lloyd yesterday. "We know we've been turned over here, but there's a real roll-your-sleeves-up-andlet's-get-on-with-it optimism regarding the next Test in Barbados.

"As soon as we'd lost, I got everyone together in the dressing-room and told them to for-



Atherton: Batting poorly

get that game, it was finished. We all know we've got to get a positive attitude for Barbados, not next week, but now from today. We know we're every hit as good as this opposition, and we know we can come back at them

Whether the pitch in Bridgetown or whether Ambrose and Walsh will allow a repeat of four years ago, when England stormed to victory, is what an estimated 10,000 England supporters here are eagerly waiting to see.

Hill may regret first big mistake

putting on a brave face as be confronts an unending barrage of queries about his prospects for the new season, but those who see him away from the gaze of the cameras say his dismay is all too apparent.

Privately, he must be asking himself how he can justify turning down a chance of joining McLaren-Mercedes and opting instead for Jordan Mugen-Honda, Those who suggested his motivation was money rather than a quest for a second world championship maintain they have been vindicated, and Hill admits he was unimpressed with McLaren's financial proposition.

There is a belief his response was anticipated and welcomed by McLaren, all part of Formula One's political games. Whatever the substance of that theory, the reality now, on the eve of another campaign, is that Hill has palpably chosen the wrong car.

While the McLaren has been setting the pace in preseason testing and earning the status of title favourite, the Jordan has been lagging ominously behind, sitting among midfield scavengers who will be hoping to pick up odd points

here and there. One Briton unlikely to be weeping for Hill is David Coulthard, whose position at McLaren was seemingly put in jeopardy by the team's negoti- It is reported that the younger atings with the former champion. Coulthard and Mika heen relishing the English-Hakkinen, who was also retained after Hill ruled himself out of the equation, have the car of the mament

DAMON HILL is dutifully As Britain's drivers prepare for the new grand prix season which starts this weekend, the former world

> by his choice of car, says Derick Allsop terms of the championship at depart frustrated, if a lot rich-

this stage. I always felt this was anyway. But that's not to say we won't be going into the season in a positive frame of mind,"

Not, however, as positive as he and Eddie Jordan would have envisaged. The car has patently disappointed the team so far and lap times appear to

Brits on the grid Damon Hill (Jordan) David Coulthard (McLaren) Age: 26, Races: 58, Wins: 3 Eddie Irvine (Ferrari) Johnny Herbert (Sauber) Age 33 Races RJ, West 2

confirm pit-lane predictions that Prost had the better of the deal when they exchanged their Mugen-Honda engine for Jordan's Peugeot.

Far from rejoining Michael Schumacher, Jacques Villeneuve and the others in the main event, Hill may have his hands full containing his own team-mate, Ralf Schumacher. of the German brothers has man's ohvious discomfort.

The scenario is exasperatingly familiar for Hill, who hoped against hope he might Hill concedes: "It would be lead Arrows from obscurity to unrealistic for us to think in prominence last season, only to

champion may already be stymied

er. Another £4.5m would be going to be a two-year effort, some consolation this year and at least Jordan start further up the ladder and have the re-

> sources to improve. To a point. The hig points beckon for Coulthard, now sensing the chance to firmly establish himself as Britain's No 1 driver and mount a genuine challenge for the championship. He was adamant all last summer he was optimistic of keeping his place at McLaren and that this was the place to he. His judgement appears impeccable.

McLaren are in the ascendancy, Adrian Newey's car flying dear of the rest the moment it was released from its box. If Mercedes can achieve the reliability to match the undoubted power of their engine, and the Bridgestone tyres fulfil their promise, then the Woking package will prove irresistible.

Coulthard to see off his generally more fancied team-mate and prove he is worthy of the championship. Still not 27, the Scot ought to have time on his side, but such is the competitive nature of this business he knows there is no guarantee of another such opportunity. A member of the team said: "I've never seen David more focused."

Coulthard concurs: "I've prepared for this season better than for any other. I've left nothing to chance. Physically



and mentally I'm ready.

"I had a short break at the end of last season, then got Which would leave stuck into my training and I've worked really hard on my fitness. It was good to know that every night while I was in the gym, the other drivers were sitting watching CNN.

When you are fitter physically it helps you become stronger mentally. You are more alert, and that has been evident through the testing."

Despite the McLaren's speed in testing, however, Coulthard, like Hakkinen, insists the real gauge will be after Sunday's opening grand prix in Melbourne. Coulthard

good, but until we actually start racing we don't know anything for sure. We certainly hope to be competitive and I've been confident all along that we would have a car capable of win-

ning races. "At the same time we know that Williams will be strong, Ferrari will be strong and Benetton will be strong. And of course my team-mate will be very competitive."

Hakkinen finished last season the more convincing of the two, even if Coulthard was placed higher in the championship. That might be seen as a psychological advantage for ambitions of the championship,

Coulthard.

He said: "Mika's quick and had some good races towards the end of last year, but that could be down to the fact that those particular circuits suited him. Perhaps I'll find the circuits early in the season suiting me again. Mika's form certainly hasn't affected my confidence. 1 believe in myself and always have done. I'm not saying I'm going to do that or the other, just that I know if the car is OK

I can deliver the results." Northern Ireland's Eddie Irvine is the only member of the leading teams not permitted

to convince a sceptical Italian nudience he is deserving of the Ferrari seat alongside Michael Schumacher.

Irvine's times in testing have said. compared favourably with the German's and he is in apparently good spirits, hut noncommittal about his prospects for the season. He said: "I'm feeling rea-

sonably good hut you never know until the season starts. I think we have worked well and should be pretty good, hut we'll find out soon, won't we?"

Johnny Herbert, the Englishman at Sauber, confronts an

said: "The car appears to be the Finn, although not by even if his car proves the best intriguing domestic duel with a in the field. However, be still has new team-mate, the gifted hut tempestuous French-Sicilian, Jean Alesi. "So far there hasn't been any problem, he's been easy to get on with," Herbert

The testing has been less encouraging. Herbert described a recent stint at Barcelona as "the worst I've had at Sauber". Reliability has been the elusive

Many respected observers believe the new regulations. introducing narrower cars and grooved tyres, ought to suit the unfulfilled Herbert. The pity is be will again be stuck with a midfield car.

keeps or

Wales try to rebuild shattered confidence with wholesale changes

Rugby Union

By Chris Hewett

KEVIN BOWRING, the Wales coach, may have been "embarrassed, hurt and humiliated" by the capitulation of his side during their Five Nations nightmare at Twickenham II days ago, but he was emphatic in his insistence yesterday that the Welsh Rugby Union was fully behind his latest attempt to rebuild national morale. It was an uncomfortable moment; as any football manager might have pointed out, Bowring would do far better to keep his employers in front of him, where be can see them.

The former London Welsh flanker is far too shrewd and in-sonnus as to border on the ra-

telligent an operator not to realise that his backside is squarely on the line following the 60-point seeing-to from England. Bowring has made eight changes, two of them positional, for this weekend's "home" match with Scotland at Wembley and the wholesale renovation work looks and smells as though it was carried nut in some dark corner of the Last Chance Saloon.

"My contract runs through to next year's World Cup, said Bowring, fully aware that Richie Dixon, Brian Ashton, Willie Anderson, Dick Best and Boh Dwyer had contracts 100. The critical fall-out from Twickenham has been so poi-

dioactive and defeat this weekend would generate such public opprobrium that the WRU might feel obliged to act. Terry Cohner, Wales' direcfor of rugby, set the emotional

tone for yesterday's hair-shirt ily and friends," he said.

session in Cardiff. "When I go to bed at night, the England disappointment is the last thing 1 think of, when I wake up in the morning, it's the first thing on my mind," he admitted. Bowring seemed equally prepared to wear his heart on his sleeve as he described the debilitating experience of the last week or so. "It's been so painful, not just for me but for my fam-"The history of the Wales-England fixture means so much

to the people here. It represents the small country taking on the a shortage of painthrushes. Still the deed is done; Jenkmight of the hig country and when we do well, it lifts the nation. We didn't lift anyone at

down." The subtext of his words was clear. He dare not let anyone down this time." Bowring has placed his immediate future in the bands or, to be mure accurate, the right boot - of Neil Jenkins, who returns at outside-half for the more extravagantly gifted Arwel Thomas. Jenkins' performance at Twickenham in the full-back position he so publicly detests was almost too painful to watch and for the coach to make

Twickenham, we let them

akin to blaming Van Gogh for a pointed relegation for Scott

ins' return to life at No 10 may mean fewer moments in the sun for the likes of Allan Bateman and Gareth Thomas, but he is at least capable of playing the percentages sufficiently well to keep the Scots in the dark. To that end. Bowring has beefed up his front five by recalling Garin Jenkins at hooker, and Andy Moore, the restart spe-

Other changes see Kevin Morgan at full-back and a reshaped back row featuring Kingsley Jnnes, the Ebbw Vale captain, alongside two more Swansea men, Rob Appleyard and Colin Charvis. That means

cialist at lock.

Quinnell, whose contribution at Twickenham subsided from the intermittent to the non-

Ireland, meanwhile, have recalled Eric Elwood and Conor McGuinness at halfback for their thankless trip to France. Rob Henderson replaces the injured Mark McCall at centre while Victor Costello fills in for the flu-ridden Eric Miller at No 8. The new coach, Warren Gatland, will choose between two open-side flankers, Kieron Dawson and the uncapped Andy Ward, later this

ireland team. Sporting Digest, page 27

Wales team v Scotland, Wembley, Saturday

K Morgan (Pontypridd) W Proctor (Lineil)
A Bateman (Richnor S Gibbs (Swansea)
G Thomas (Cardil) N Jenkins (Pontypridd) R Howley (Cardiff, capt) A Lewis (Cardiff)

G Jenkins (Swansea) D Young (Cardiff) M Yoyle (Liznell) A Moore (Swansea) R Appleyard (Swansea K Jones (Ebbw Vale) C Charvis (Swansea)

Reptacements: L. Davies (Caron), A Thomas (Swanses), P John (Pou-typridd), S Quinnell (Richmond), S Roy (Pontypridd), L. Mustoe (Cardiff), J Humphreys (Cardiff).

Agassi keeps his comeback rolling along

Tennis

ANDRE AGASSI went through to the second round of the Franklin Templeton Classic in Scottsdale, Arizona, by beating the sixth seed, Albert Portas, 3-6, 6-1, 6-2, on Monday night.

The former world No I finished 1997 ranked 122nd, but having beaten the No 1, Pete Sampras three weeks ago to win his first title in almost two years, Agassi is back in the top 50. He was given a wild card into this tournament, which be won in 1993 and 1994.

"Once I started stepping up the pace with my shots, I was more accurate with my footwork, and he was unable to respond. It felt like I remembered it." said Agassi, who won 12 of the final 15 games of Monday's match. "I need to work on everything... [But] the hardest part is over now. It's just about routine and doing it every day."

Earlier, Carlos Costa, of Spain, had beaten the third seed, Magnus Norman of Sweden, 6-4, 7-6, and Dominik Hrbaty of Slovakia knocked out the seventh seed Julian Alonso of Spain 6-2, 6-2. Another seed to fall was the the No 5, Spain's Francisco Clavet, who lost 4-6. 7-6, 6-4 to Jeff Tarango.

Clubs nip upstairs in attempt to bring Brittle to negotiating table

ENGLAND'S leading Premiership clubs will seek an carly meeting with Cliff Brittle, the chairman of the Rugby Football Union's management board, to thrash out a solution to the latest political crisis over player availability for this summer's four-Test tour of the southern hemisphere, writes Chris Hewett

Whether they actually get their meeting is a different matter altogether, as things stand, the clubs have more talked in almost six months."

Murdoch to publish a book entitled: "Why we hate China."

Both Brittle and the officers of the English Rugby Partnership, the joint RFU-club body charged with administering the domestic professional game, work from the same building at Twickenham, yet the last official contact between the two

took place in October. "He's upstairs, they're downstairs and they haven't

chance of persuading Rupert said one baffled observer yes- are preparing to pressure indi-

The clubs suspect that Brittle has no intention of discussing either of the major issues threatening the stability of the English game: the contracting of players and the structured fixture list. They have accused the RFU of breaking off negotiations on the preparation of a standard contract covering domestic and international rugby and be-

vidual England players into signing lock, stock and barrel with the governing body. Indeed, insiders say Lawrence Dallaglio, the England captain, has already been targeted.

Thomas one of the scapegoats for an insipid forward display is

Donald Kerr, the ERP chairman, is planning an emergency meeting of his executive to discuss the decision of Northampton to ban their players from touring with England in June. Keith Barwell, the lieve Brittle and his colleagues Saints owner and something of

a loose cannon among the and giving us financial stabili- have distanced themselves from owner-investors, says he has taken a unilateral stand to save his leading lights from burn-out. Barwell has gone far further

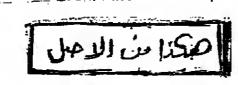
than any fellow owner in dietating to his charges and one of them, Tim Rodber, accepted yesterday that he would be spending the summer on a beach rather than on the playing fields of Brisbane, Auckland and Cape Town. "Keith is our boss and we can't disregard the ty for the next five years," the Saints captain said.

"Ultimately, he is looking after his employees in the interests of Northampton. We've signed a contract with the club. Whatever happens, I'll be fresh for next season."

The Saracens squad met their employer, Nigel Wray, yesterday but were not told in so many words that they would not be permitted to tour. Wasps, who man who is paying our salary have Dallaglio under contract,

an outright ban, while Bath insist that the decision will be left to individuals. However, the clubs will at-

tempt to present a united front in an effort to force the contract issue on to the RFU agenda. "We want it sorted, as do the players," a clubs' spokesman said. "Keith made his pronouncement to initiate discussion. The only way anyone gets anything done is to suggest something outrageous."



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PAULA RADCLIFFE has de-She took the silver medal cided to keep her optinns open about competing in two events at the World Cross-Country

over the longer distance last year, but is not convinced she Championships in Morocco latwill be strong enough to cope with the 4km race, a new addition to the schedule nn the second day.

in attempt a tough double.

"I asked the selectors to include me in the 4km team teams at the meeting in Mar- only if there was a vacancy,"

AROUND THE RESORTS

ANDORR

AUSTRIA

BULGARIA

CANADA

Lac Louise

MALY

SPAIN

SWITZERLAND

UNITED STATES

felt after her second place behind Derarty Tulu in Turin. Radcliffe is under no illusions about the difficulty of doing the double. "I felt shot to pieces the following day," she said, an indication she may settle for winning gold over the traditional distance rather than risk falling

Conscious of how tired she

between two hurdles. SNOW REPORTS

Ampshoe Basin ___fresh snow on firm-packed base 1009, 01.03 HS 50 Part cloudy

Snow Reports supplied by Ski Hotline

Radcliffe keeps options open Pearce is

says she is still uncertain whether it's 50-50 whether I do both

BERYL VINCENT needed just 15 ends to brush aside Pat Pearce, of the Preston club in Brighton, 21-6 to win the Champion of Champions singles event at the English Women's

Indoor Championships in Great Yarmouth. Vincent, of Teignbridge in Devon, edged into a 4-2 lead after five ends and at the close of the 10th had increased her advantage in 11-6. She then moved min overdrive and a run

of 2-1-3-3-1 secured victory. In the semi-finals, Vincent had beaten Gloria Haney, from Spalding in Lincolnshire, 21-11, while Pearce had seen off Yvonne Lyons, of Riverain,

Hertfordshire, winning 21-17. In the pairs championship, the defending champinus, Mandy Jackim and Catherine Anton of Peterborough, bowed out in the first round when they lost 21-17 to Janette Tomlin and

Chris Hiom of Boston.

Jean Smith and Ann Harrison, of Folkestone, last year's beaten finalists, edged through with a 19-16 win over Jean Lee and Jan Byford of Tilbury, Essex. Brenda Bailey and Di Whittingham, of the Preston club, who took the unbadged pairs title earlier in the week, picked up a last-end five to beat Margaret

Land and Carol Dennison of the

Lawns, Middlesex, 18-17

ENGLISH WOMEN'S INDOOR CHAMPI-ONSHIPS (Potters Leisure Centre, G Chempion of Chemp mi-finals: P Peace (Pre-Y Lyons (Page 1)

batsman Mark, has been appointed Surrey's 2nd XI coach Butches, 44 was

Worcestershire have appointed John Elfott, 56, as chairmen in succession to Duncan Feamley. Bliott, a gerege pro-prietor, was understudy wicketheeper during the country's Championship-winning seasons of 1964 and 1965.

winning seasons of 1964 and 1965. Warwickshire are to play four of this year's Sunday League cricket match-es under floodlights at Edgbeston. The county have arranged with Lan-cashire, Hampshire, Essex and Glam-organ to switch their scheduled Sunday games to midweek. The metiches will start at 5pm and finish around 1030pm. around 10.30cm. Mike Denness, the former Kent and

England capitals, has been re-elect-ed to the country's general committee for another three-year term along with the cricket committee challman Derek Urion and the former president

Carl Heater was the unexpected win-ner of the Spillers Equestrian Par-sonality of the Year award, which was

a Rider and Pony suggestnes): Equestrian Personality of the Year: C Heese: Horae of the Year: Cosmopolism II, ridden by W Fox-Pitt. Racing Personality: Lord Opicaey. Spillers Dismond swander: Sister M J Langdon, Co T Kopanies and T Vaughan-France, Scholarships: F Whitington (norse

FOOTBall
MONDAY'S RESULTS: FA Carling Premisratip: What Hern D Ansered Q GM Viscohall Conference Spekiding Chellenge
Cup Semi-final second leg; Northwich 3
Morecambe 1, Irlah Coce-Cole Floodlist
Cup: Camera-final: Genesor 3 Newry 3 set,
Glansson won 3-2 on premises). Dr Martense
league Cup Fourth-round replay: Recidich
4 Glancaser 1. Unition League Uniffies
First Division Cup semi-fined first leg: Astrtrial Lucools lid 4. Northern Counties.
East League Premier Division: Portein.
Unid Lucools lid 4. Northern Counties.
East League Premier Division: Portein.
Sanderlend 2 Botton 1; Wolves 1 Hucklersleid: 3. Noro Insuransea Contibination First
Division: Brighton 1. Norwich 4. Spanish
League: Santander 2 Barcalpra. 4.
FOOTBALL LEAGUE-SQUAD (v Italian Se-Football

Legue: Serfander 2 Barcelona 4.
FOOTBALL, LEAGUE-SGILAD (v Ballan Serie B XI, The Valley, Tueaday 10 March):
Wright (bewich), Sinonsen (fizhmore), Perry (CPR), O'Brien (Braction), Mills (Norwich),
Rogers (Notim Forest), Armstroag (Notim
Forest), Ormstrod (Middestrough), Dussinia
(CPR), M R Brown (Man City), Diper (Inc.
(CPR), M J Johnson (Dowich), Campbell
(Middestrough), Lisble (Cheriton).
WALES B SCHAD (v Scottand B, Chyde's

Croseley (Notinghen Forest) Pritt (Bristol Rovers), Edwards (Swarses, Hughes (Aston Ville), Davies (Res Lloyd (Barry), Roberts (Liverpor

SULTAN AZLAN SHAH CUP (Ipoh): Eng-jand 0 Germany 1; New Zeeland 2 Korea 3; Australia 5 Malaysia 0.

a chance.

Jce hockey NHL: Pitesburgh 3 Toronto 1; New Jense Philadelphia 3; Buffalo 1 NY Rangers 0; E monton S Colorado 4 (ct); Detroit 3 Phoe

Photograph: Peter jay

Sadly, Spackman will only be

"in" if he plays for Sheffield

United again this season, but

Paralympics
BRITISH PARALYMPIC WINTER GAMES
TEAM: Apine exing: R Burt (Warminster),
M Hemmond (Sparisted), S Morrie (New-Heat, Surrey), S Shaw (Presion), Nordic sid-ing: T Ahruna (Carabruck, Ger), P Young (Departum), Lee Nockey: P Balley (Stock-port), A Booth (Marchester), M Broadbert, (Llandough, Glarrargum), D Cavantegh (Cheeda), L Gwynder (Cardiff), O Hall (Cheeda), L Gwynder (Cardiff), C Hall (Cheeda), L Gwynder (Cardiff), C Hall (Cheeda), Carnocki, A Meete (Cheetarfield), K Mcholdeot (Marchester), S Stocked (Wallington), G Vaugham (Dewestry), I Warn-er (Notingham), **Paralympics**

Rugby Union

currently serving a six-month suspen-sion for ear-biting, was awarded legal costs by Beth megistrates yesterday at-ter they dishussed a private prosecu-tion brought by Roy Edey, a pensioner from Harrow-on-the-Hill. We Edey said he had brought the action to give Yates a Chance to defend himself in public actions blacetices that he his blaces.

set for 'carnival' at QPR JAMAICA'S "Reggac Boyz",

who were refused permission to play the Republic of Ireland at Loftus Road, will instead take on Queen's Park Rangers at the First Division club's ground, They will field a full-strength side in a testimonial for the Rangers midfielder Simon Barker on 22 March.

It will be the first time the Jamaicans, whose squad includes English-based players, have appeared in Europe.

The Jamaican Football Federation's president. Horace Burrell said: "We hope the Jamaicans in London pack the QPR ground to capacity for this worthy cause."

Paul Murray, QPR's England B international, is out for the rest of the season after breaking his leg at Norwich on Saturday.

Aherdeen have decided against sacking their Bulgarian midfielder, Ilian Kirinkov, after he apologised for spitting at Jim McIntyre during last Saturday's match against Kilmarnock. He has been fined two weeks wages, £8,000,

Tranmere Rovers have signed Dariusz Kubicki, a Poland defender, on loan from their First Division rivals Wolves until the end of the scason,

Bournemouth, chasing promotion from the Second Divisinn, have signed the striker Mark Stein on loan from Chelsea until the end of the season.

Swindon made a loss of £662,097 in the year ending June 1997, leaving the First Division club with total debts of almost £4.5m. Their manager, Steve McMahon, has been told he cannot have any more mocey to spend on new players, McMahon has been charged with misconduct by the Football Association after being dismissed from the dug-out during his side's 1-0 win at Port Vale on 17 February.

Dennis Wise has been called before an FA disciplinary panel after becoming the first Premicrship player to accumulate 11 bookings this season.

Brighton are considering a ground-share with Sussex Countv Cricket Club. The Scagulis, who sold the Goldstone Ground two years ago and now play "home" matches 73 miles away at Gillingham, have held talks with Sussex about constructing a multi-sports site, including football and cricket venues.

Tottenham's coach, Christian Gross, will contact Aimé Jacquet this week to press David Ginnla's claims for a recall to the France squad for the World Cup finals, Ginnla last played for France in their last qualifying match for the 1994 World Cup, when a last-minute goal by Bulgaria eliminated

ts: N H ons), C Keerem (String Co), G Hoyle (Ab erdeen GS FP); J White (Watsonians, capt G McCaffum (Boroughmuir); C Rae (Str

Sailing

The British entry in the Whithread The british entry in the Whitpheap Round the World Race, Silk Cut, has finally completed the fifth leg, arriving at Sao Sebastilla, Brazil, 20 days at-ter losing their mast in the Southern Ocean. The crew now faces a race against time to complete repairs be-fore the sixth leg begins on 14 March. Skiing

Austria's double Olympic gold medal-ist, Herman Maier, yesterday withdraw from Saturday's World Cup downhill in

Sports education

Plans were unuefled vestenday for a new institute of Youth Sport at Loughborough University. The institute is to be funded by Loughborough University and the Youth Sports Trust. It will act as a feeder to the new UK Institute of Sport in Sheffield. Squash

PROFESSIONAL SQUASH ASSOCIATION WORLD RANKINGS (previous positions in brackets): 1 (1) P Mool (Scot); 2 (2). tarsher (Ann. (Patt); 3 (3) J Power (Carr); 4 (4) R Sylves (Auc); 5 (3) A Baneta (Eg), Others; 6 (7) A Gough (Mall; 7 (6) S Parké (Eng); 9 (1) M Chabaner (Eng).

WORLD INDOOR TOURNAMENT (Rot-terdam); First round: G Racux (F) bt O Varsk (Cx Rep) 6-2 6-3; K Carisen (Oen) of S Ultrach (Cx Rep) 4-6 7-6 7-5; T Car-bonel (Sp) bt J Bjorkmen (Swe) 8-7 8-3 6-4

Spackman's tale of the unexpected

In his last interview as manager of Sheffield United, Nigel Spackman gave few clues to Guy Hodgson about yesterday's surprise

could no longer surprise. In a sport where managers and players do things that defy reason almost daily it is an occasion for hours a day, faxes coming in, TV. eyebrows in shoot skyward when convention is the norm rather than the bizarre. Yet Nigel Spackman's resignation as Sheffield United's manager yes-

terday was a shock. At 3.45pm on Mnnday I had left him cheerfully conquarter-final at Coventry City this weekend. He was not blissappeared in be more resigned. to the difficulties of being manager at Bramall Lane than

inclined to offer his resignation. "When will the article appear?" he asked as we parted. "Could you send me a copy?" Earlier he had been laughing with his assistants, Russell Slade and Steve Thompson. These were not the comments and actions of a man anxiously wrestling with a difficult choice. He was excited about being fifth in the First Division and at the tantalising proximity of Wembley. The mood change came

later that evening. It is more difficult to understand the timing than in discern the reasons why. Brian Deane, Jan Age Fjortoft, Carl Tiler, Mitch Ward and, last week. Don Hutchison had been sold years with him he might decide and he was operating on a play- to move upstains or do someer's contract because the club—thing else. I thought there'd get was haggling over his manage—my chance, but it came at least rial terms. Losing his coach, 12 months earlier than I anticome Wille Douschie, to Magcheste

City last week must have pushed him closer to the last straw. It sounds like a recipe for chaos, I had said to him, point-. been shareholders with violent intent if a major public company (Sheffield United are listed on the London stock market) such as ICI nperated in such an unconventional manner. He

smiled, thought carefully, and replied: "Those are your words not mine." 'That's football," he continued after a another pause. "There's always something that makes you look up in surprise. It's opened my eyes being in this seat, watching the ups and downs, the comings and goings. They are things you have to cope with as a manager, the sort of things as a player you

Sporting Digest

YOU would think football done. It's not just a case of picking the team and coaching, h's all the other things. "I've got agents phoning 24 crews and reporters to deal with. It's nice when you're doing well, so I hope it will continue

because things can turn round quickly in football." Spackman will have a greater understanding of that last sentence this morning. He templating United's FA Cup became manager ahead of his own timescale and voluntarily reduced to the ranks of a playfully content, but, if anything, he er again after nine months of success dredged from an unpromising, not to say nearly impossible, position. How he can be expected in train and

> dilcuma the new man will not enjoy tackling A clever midfield player with Bournemnuth, Chelsea, Liverponl, Queen's Park Rangers and Glasgow Rangers, whn would have won England caps but for a series of untimely injuries, Spackman was pointed towards Bramall Lane by an 18-month lay-off. He expected to serve an apprenticeship as Howard Kendall's playing assistant until the managerial

"I thought if I came in with ated. I decided that it I was a

Walsall beat them in the Coca-Cola Cup third round and it was League reverse. Even with players disappearing like a magitained an nuheaten home record that was extended to 24

perform for his successor is a sorcerer left for Everton last

Howard and spent two or three a failure then at least I'd given it a try. I wouldn't be thinking 'if only in the periodic in

Some failure. The Blades ing nut that there would have not suffer their first defeat invil 25 October before their first cian's rabbits - Deane with 13 goals and Fjortoft 12 are still the Blades' top scorers - they main-

games on Saturday. "It just shows the character nf the players we have got here really," Spackman said. "Things were going very well at the start but the team began changing because of injuries to Dane Whitehouse, Wayne Quinn and Paul McGrath and then there were wouldn't dream were being the transfers. It feels like peo- Obviously, to lose your two top



Nigel Spackman: 'It feels like people have been coming and going all season. You get to a point where it becomes normality' ple have been coming and go-

where it becomes normality and you have to get on with it." How many players had left against his wishes? "I can't really say," he replied. "That's a political matter, isn't it?

scorers on the same day - 15 January - wasn't the best thing ing all season. You get to a point that could happen, but all credit to the other lads who went nut the following Saturday and beat Wolverhampton Wanderers I-0, playing some very good football. That was a tribute in the spirit

brushed aside

by Vincent

here and their ability."

ability you suspect, will be under duress on Saturday when United will be expected to rise from the rubble of domestic strife to tackle Coventry of the

That spirit, rather than their barking and hiting without a While you're still in you've got

We would have preferred a home draw," Spackman said, "but we've nothing to lose. The pressure's un Coventry, who are that can be safely consigned to Premiership. They were expected to win. That's the the pigs might fly category. A underdogs before Spackman's romance of the Cup. You know manager's job elsewhere will expected to win. That's the the pigs might fly category. A

departure; now they could be anyone can get to the final. surely be offered soon.

NBA: Washington 96 LA Lakers 86; Char-lotte 112 Golden State 83; Detroit 100 Del-las 94, San Antonio 116 Sacramento 95 **Bowls**

ONSHIPS (Potters Leasure Centre, us Yarmoutth): Chempion of Chempions singles seath-fitnais: P Pearce (Presion, Brighton) bt Y Lyona (Pheesiah Heris) 21-77; 2 Vincent (Registridge, Devon) bt G Haney (Spaiding, Linea) 21-71. Finel: Vincent bt Pearce 21-8 Pains first round: Dies, Nor-folk (B Mark & C Polington) bt Stevenage, Heris (B Boceys & J Ward) 23-14; Follostone (J Smith & A Harrison) bt Tibury, Essex (J Lies & J Bylond) 19-16; West Cornsell (J Rowstree & G Thomes) bt Woodpring, Som-erast (M Noddings & A Pigerin) 21-14; King George Field, Surray (B Dudley & S Flick-man) bt Atheries, Southerspton (A Dibbie & W Line) 29-12; Presion, Brighton (B Baley) & Il Whittingham) bt The Lawas, Middlestox (M Land & C Demison) 19-77; Eghan, Sur-rey (B Whetland & K Strut) bt Aurnial bt Cumbria (C Edmondson & E Gess) 25-16; Boton, Newcastle (N Craig & A Lennia) bt Cumbria (C Edmondson & C Horn) bt Peter-borough (M Jacktin & C Anton) 21-17.

Cricket Surreys 270 At Coach Bulling, 4, 4972 to 0 the staff at The Oval from 1972 to 1986 when he opened the batting. He played for England once, against in-dia in 1979.

Peter Edgley.
TOUR MATCH (Visekimpatnern, India)
Final day of three Match desert. BCC
Presidents 3 239-46ee. Australa 567-8 (M
Stater 204, R Ponting 155; A Kuruville 3-105). Equestrianism

presented in London yesterday. SPELERS EQUESTRIAN AWARDS (de-cided on votes cost by readers of Horse

WALES B SQUAD (v Scotland B, Chyde's Broadwood Stadlum, Cumbertand, Tues-day 24 March): Ward (Notic County).

PSCTURE: TUE: SI MAR: Backburn Rovers v. Bernsley from 7 Man.;
SUSPENSIONS: Sending-offer Fe Certing Presidenthips: J. Hartson/West Harn Utrl) three makens from 4 March: O Gondon (Crystal Palses) one match from 8th March: Cautioner FA Certifing Presidenthips: Five: G Farrelly (Everton) Avo metches from 9 March; R Vestico (Leeds) avo matches from 8 March; B Rubeiro (Leeds) avo matches from 8 March; B Rubeiro (Leeds) avo matches from 7 March; B Souncie (Bameley) two matches from 7 March; J. Bosancie (Bameley) two matches from 7 March; J. Harten, Webenson) avo matches from 7 March; Greiffeld Webnackel) avo matches from 7 March; Utrile (Nottingham Forest) 2 avo matches from 7 avo matches from 7 avo

Kevin Yates, the Bath and England prop

Fern, the London Scottish flanker, during a cup tie in January.

IRELAND (Rive Nations' Chemploraship, v France, Paria, Saturday): C O'Shee (London Irish): R Wellace (Saracers), R Henderson (Maspe), K Aleages (Grisson). II Hickie (St Mary's College); E Etwood (Galwegars), C BioCulminess). (St Mary's College): R Corrigen (Greystones). K Wood (Fairbquins, capt), P Whitese (Saracers), P Johte (Saracers), M O'Kelly (London Irish), II Contery (Bristo). K Dawson (London Irish), A Ward (Ballyrabinch), V Costello (St Mary's College). Repleacersis: M Lyrich (Young Munster), D Humphreys (London Irish), B O'Rear (Dort Constitution), N Popplement (Newcastle), R Needale

Critical (Volume Marison, D. Velentriye (London Irish), B. O'likera (Cork Constitution), N. Popplawelli (NewCastle), R. Newdale (NewCastle), P. Ciohessy (Young Munsion), M. Gahvey (Stennon), M. Gahvey (Stennon), M. Gahvey (Stennon), M. Sance, (Portyprido), N. Boothyer (Lanelli), J. Lawis, (Portyprido), N. Boothyer (Lanelli), J. Lawis, (Portyprido), D. James, (Portyprido), B. Moothyer (Bichmond, ed.), A. Moore (Richmond, ed.), M. Moore (Castle), M. Williams, C. Walley, M. Harries, G. Maries, M. Maries, M. Moore, C. Moore, C. Llanelli, M. Storwey (UMA), B. Winn; (Bridgend), T. Davis (Newn), S. Cressways) (Bridgend), T. Davis (Newn), S. Cressways) (Bridgend), I. Janvis (Carolfi), G. Downes (Bridgend); I. Janvis (Carolfi), G. Downes (Bridgend); I.

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Football

Gleng Moore

FOOTBALL is played in many places, but even Mancbester United's much-travelled players can bave been to few like the location which hosts their return to Europe. There may be docks and roadworks nearby, but little clse surrounding the Stade Louis II to remind them of the Salford industrial estate they call

While Old Trafford domiline, Monaco's ground, carefully landscaped to blend in with the tiled-roofed luxury apartments of grand prix drivers and retired financiers, is barely visible from the Grimaldi palace above.

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the United States to Japan are here to see if this quarter-final first leg will find Alex Fergusoo's side taking another step in their quest to emulate Sir Matt Busby's Champions' Cup winners of

Twice as many media attended Ferguson's press conference as that of Jean Tigana, the Monaco coach. In response, Ferguson was cool and reserved. Tigana all toothy smiles nates the west Manchester sky- and giggles. Was the United manager feeling the pressure while his opponent relaxed? No. Wheo the television cameras and tape recorders were switched off, so was the pro-

30 winlers ago.

Tonight, however, the eyes of ing been careful not to give any. Phil Neville continuing to strong defensive core, the mid- we could have bad" and "they the world, if not the Principal- thing away nor to indicate either deputise for Gary Pallister - who field is well-balanced and hard- are very good defensively." ity, will be on the elegant sta- fear or over-confidence, now is out for another seven to 10 working. Algeria's Ali Benarbia dium. Televisioo crews from cracked jokes with English and days - and Ryan Giggs. Mona- is the link with Nigeria's Victor be a night for discipline and con- ground, but many will still be left it is usually a quagnure io win-French alike. Tigana's demeanour, how-

> Football is a sideshow here and the higgest demands on them are from within; United carry the hopes of half a nation and the burden of history. The European games are special," Gary Neville said. "All

ever, was indicative of the less-

er expectation on the bosts.

the great sides have won the European Cup and that is the standard we want to set ourselves. It is important to win the tro-

United are likely to go into the match with the team that finished Saturday's victory over Chelsea, Henning Berg and

co bave injury doubts over sev eral players including John Collins of Scotland, but the serious concern is David Trezeguet. The oew French cap has a knee injury and is likely to be replaced by Thierry Henry.

A more than useful deputy, he is the tournament's top scorer. Monaco are billed as a couoter-attacking team, but they are not just sprinters. Twice in the Champions' League stage they came back from 2-0 down. notably beating Sporting Lisbon 3-2 when the Portuguese side were defending in depth. The

goalkeeper, Fabien Barthez, is

the French No 1, Franck Dumas

player of the year, and Henry or Trezeguet.

United have plenty of threat themselves despite the loss of Giggs, their most potent attacking weapon. "Who is their pivotal player?" Tigana was asked. "This is the problem, there is not just one," he said.

The former French international midfielder, who yesterday eoded speculation about his future by extending his contract by two years, was gushing about United, but Ferguson said dismissively: "They all build us up. It's just talk," before heaping his own praise on Monaco, who he

Both managers stressed it will cupy a third of the 15.000-seat teams. United, with only three bookings in the tournament (by far the best record) have Paul Scholes and Berg oo yellow cards. Monaco could have eight players just one caution away from missing the second leg.

The referee, Manuel Diaz Vega, was excellent in United's win away to Fenerbahce last season, but Stuart Pearce was less enamoured by the bandball be gave in England's match against Switzerland in Euro 96.

United supporters are here in numbers, although oot many are thought to have arrived on the many English-registered and Martin Djetou provide a described as "the toughest draw yachts in the marinas - football

gentrification has not gone that spite being better than usual, is far. The fans are expected to oc-still very bobbly. Built over a car

To reduce the risk of their swish boulevards being despoiled by excluded fans, Monaco are relaying the game on a big screeo outside. A bright idea oo the night, but a dangerous precedent in that it encourages fans to travel without tickets to future games.

Inside, there remains concern over the pitch which, de-

park with just eight inches of soil, A Monaco official admitted it is often a "champ des pommes de terre". It looked green as United trained last night, but this evening they hope to make hay. onaco (probable): Barthez; Dumas; Seg-l, Konic, Leonard; Lelgwinski, Djetou, illins; Benarbia; Ikpeba, Trezeguet or

Reference M Diaz Vega (Spain)

fessional mask. Ferguson, hav-THE INDEPENDENT CROSSWORD Thesday's Solution

ACROSS To support burdens, travels like a hiker (9) Mahler's third in the full version (5)

Desperate measure one clutches at, now skinblemishes return (5) Beginnings of tinea, with ervthema and languor (9) 28 Festival on my father's

land? (10) 12 Stock check (4) Split arrow? (7) Haggard woman happened to make homemade whiskey (7)

Operating without liquid, Roman emperor needs outside help (7) Moralizing, target is found 6 round a church (7)

Teases old wives (4) Not fond of greens? How upsetting! (3-7) Eleventh-hour revival of the side (9)

One mile past is as far as an insect can go (5) Distinctive character of those in trouble (5) Sitting a lot deters any constitution (9)

DOWN To thrash, beats in a frenzy Actor's cue, perhaps to

sparkle (9) Magazine for ladies (6-4) 21 Strange dialect a feature of Dover, for example (7) 23 Deep grave (7) Notes on cracking opera? 24

Lifting the foot that is sborter (5) Cash to keep Mum, we

13 Commonplace president a-straying (10) 14 Formerly, a short deckgame and square-dance

hear (4-5)

16 Dish left in derelict hacienda (9) 18 Contaminates mountainpasses (7) Daughter after sailorman,

> Group getting cold in tub (5) Splendour of the golden-

staring in astonishment (3-

headed parrot (5) Units of energy required in the Holberg Suite? (4)

Sheffield United chairman vents fury as Spackman quits

By Chris Maume

CLUB chairman are not wont to admit their mistakes, but Nigel Spackman resigned as Sheffield United manager on Manday night to be pursued yesterday by the mocking words of Mike Mo-Donald, who said that Speckman had been given the job nine months ago against his better judgement.

Spackman, who has left with the club enjoying a healthy fifth place in the First Division and looking forward to Saturday's FA Cup quarter-final against Coventry nn Saturday, will remain with the club as a player until the end of the season, despite McDonald's outburst.

The chairman hopes to appoint a successor quickly, with the available Lou Macari thought favourite, although the name of Scarborough's Mick Wadsworth, who turned down an offer to become Spackman's assistant last week, is also thought to be in the frame. An announcement is likely to be made today. The coaches Steve Thompson and Russell Slade took charge for last night's game against Ipswich.

own self-interest ahead of the Spackman is thought to have dub. And no one can forgive that. grown frustrated with the board's We spoke [on Monday] night and I asked him about his problems. policy of putting balance sheets

before team sheets and shedding It turned out to be all hot air. At some of the club's best players, the end of the day he was not exof whom he had been forced to perienced enough to handle it." Soackman's decision appears sell five in the last four months.

not to have been an impulsive The 37-year-old who had worked without a contract and one, even though he was interwhen questioned on the subject viewed by The Independent's always said he was in negotia-Guy Hodgson on Monday and tions, clearly decided he had had gave no indication that he was enough - especially following the about to leave. recent departure of his coach, "I made my decision to step Willie Donachie, to join Joe down over the weekend," Spack-

Royle at Manchester City. man said yesterday. "My decision McDonald accused Spackwas not an easy one, but I have man of putting himself before the takeo it and it stands. In my letciub and believes the former Livter to the chairman I said that if erpool, Cheisea and Rangers it was the board's wish I would midfielder was not up to the task stay in charge of the team against of running a team on his own. Ipswich and against Coventry on Saturday, but in the absence of "Spackman was never the same man after Willie Donachie any response to that letter today, left," McDonald said, "When the I have to assume that this offer

pressure came he couldn't cope is not acceptable." McDonald was unapologetic yesterday for being careless enough to lose a manager who has produced such an upturn in up my sleeve then-and I do now. the club's fortunes.

"I came in here with a plan -I was never 100 per cent sold on to prevent relegation, to stabilise the club, to build a new stand and to float the club on the stock market," he said, "All I ask is that people look at the mess I inherited and if that isn't progress I don't know what is."

Spackman's tale, page 27

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with it. I was persuaded to give

him his chance when we lost

Howard Kendall to Everton, I

had an experienced manager

But Nigel got the job, although

him. And today it looks as if I

"By going now he has put his

have been proved right.

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